CONSTITUTIONAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN BRITAIN AND INDIA

The Transfer of Power 1942-7

Volume IV The Bengal Famine and the New Viceroyalty

15 June 1943–31 August 1944

Editor-in-Chief
NICHOLAS MANSERGH, M.A., D.Litt.

Assistant Editor
the late E. W. R. LUMBY, M.A.

HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

The fourth volume in this series covers the concluding weeks of Lord Linlithgow's long Viceroyalty and the first ten months of Lord Wavell's régime. In Delhi there was, if not a new policy, at least a new style. Where the outgoing Viceroy appeared well pleased with the comparative political tranquillity that derived from continuance of the 'so-called deadlock on the political stage', his successor from the outset stressed the need for initiatives that on the longer term would contribute to a settlement of the constitutional question, and obtained, though with some difficulty, a Cabinet directive dated 8 October 1943 which gave him some limited freedom of action in this respect. In pursuit of such purposes, and not least by exchanges with Gandhi after his release from prison in May 1944 in the light of medical opinion that he was unlikely to be an 'active factor' in politics again, the Viceroy provoked misgivings in Cabinet and Churchillian reproof. But he showed himself in this and in other matters, notably in pressing for the diversion of additional food supplies to India, a man not easily to be deflected from his considered course.

In respect of the Bengal famine the documentation reflects the strains, almost to breaking point, which the famine and its aftermath imposed upon the Bengal government and administration and records *inter alia* the reactions of the Government of India to the disaster including the timing and nature of its representations to the War Cabinet, the complexities and practical problems involved in getting food supplies to India as seen by the War Cabinet confronted, as it was, with competing claims on limited supplies of food and even greater scarcity in allied shipping resources, and the circumstances surrounding the appointment of the Australian, R. G. Casey, as Governor of Bengal.

In this as in earlier volumes, the proceedings of the War Cabinet and of certain of its committees are reprinted as well as correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy and extracts from the reports of Governors.

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THE TRANSFER OF POWER

1942-7

personal

detention camp
27-9-43.

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

On the eve of your departure permit me to send you a word. I would like to tell you in a few of all the high functionaries I have had the honour of knowing, none has been the cause of such deep sorrow to me as you have been. It has cost me to take part to have to think ill of you as having countenanced on such acts, and that regarding me with whom at one time you associated as your friend. I hope a nothing that God will someday put it into your heart to realise that you represented a great nation to a grievous error.

With good wishes,

I still remain
Your friend,
M. K. Gandhi

Mr Gandhi to Lord Linlithgow, 27 September 1943. Facsimile of Document 145

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TO THE MEMORY

OF

E. W. R. LUMBY

CONTENTS

Foreword	*Page* vii
Introduction to Volume IV	ix
Abbreviations	xix
Principal Holders of Office	xxii
Chronological Table of Principal Events	xxvii
Summary of Documents	xxxi
Documents	1
Appendix	1236
Glossary	1247
Index of Persons	1250
Index of Subjects	1281

ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece

Mr Gandhi to Lord Linlithgow, 27 September 1943. Facsimile of Document 145

Between pages 648 and 649

Field Marshal Wavell and Mr Amery, June 1943 (*Times Newspapers Ltd.*)

The Bengal Famine. From *The Statesman*, 22 August and 29 October 1943 (*The Statesman Ltd.*)

Governors' Conference, 19–20 November 1943 (*The Trustees of the Wavell Papers and Kinsey Bros., New Delhi*)

'Day of Silence' by David Low. From the *Evening Standard*, 13 July 1944 (*By arrangement with the Trustees and the London Evening Standard*)

MAP

At end of volume

India 1943–4

Foreword

On 9 March 1966 the Prime Minister, Mr Harold Wilson, announced in the House of Commons that the closed period for official records was to be reduced from fifty to thirty years. He stated that the Government also proposed that the range of Official Histories, which had hitherto been confined to the two great wars, should be extended to include selected periods or episodes of peacetime history and considered that there was scope for extending to other Oversea Departments the Foreign Office practice of publishing selected documents relating to external relations. The Prime Minister hoped that both of these subsidiary proposals, supplementing the reduction in the closed period to thirty years, would be acceptable in principle to the Opposition parties, who would be associated with their implementation.[1]

On 10 August 1966 the Prime Minister announced that a standing inter-party group of Privy Counsellors was to be appointed to consider all such proposals[2] and on 8 June 1967 that its members were, for the Government and to act as Chairman, the Right Hon. Patrick Gordon Walker, Minister without Portfolio; for the Official Opposition, the Right Hon. Sir Alec Douglas-Home; and for the Liberal Party, Lord Ogmore.[3]

A project to publish documents from the India Office Records had been under discussion for some years and on 30 June 1967 the Prime Minister, in replying to a written question in the House of Commons, announced that the first of the new series of selected documents to be published was to relate to the Transfer of Power in India. His statement was as follows:

> As I informed the House on the 9th of March, 1966, the Government have decided to extend to other Oversea Departments the Foreign Office practice of publishing selected documents concerned with our external relations, subject to inter-party agreement through the Group of Privy Counsellors whose composition I announced on the 8th of June. I am happy to inform the House that the Group have agreed that in view of the great interest now being shown in historical circles in the last days of British rule in India the first selection of documents to be published under the new arrangements should be documents from the India Office records on the Transfer of Power and the events leading up to it.
>
> The scheme will follow closely the lines of the Foreign Office series of *Documents on British Foreign Policy* from 1919 to 1939, and, as in that series, the editors will be independent historians who will be given unrestricted access to the records and freedom to select and edit documents for publication. Professor P. N. S. Mansergh, Smuts Professor of the History of the

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 725, Written Answers to Questions, cols. 561–3.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. 733, cols. 1706–7. [3] *Ibid.*, vol. 747, col. 1291.

British Commonwealth at Cambridge, has expressed willingness to accept appointment as Editor-in-Chief, and the scheme will be in full operation by the end of the year.[4]

Mr E. W. R. Lumby was appointed Assistant Editor and discharged the duties of that office until his death on 23 January 1972. His knowledge of the India Office, where he served in a variety of posts from 1934 to 1947, and more generally of Anglo-Indian relations,[5] the exactitude of his scholarship and the independence of his judgement enabled him to make his indispensable contribution to the launching of the Series, including with the first three Volumes the present Volume which was well advanced in its preparation at the time of his death. By the wish of his colleagues in the Historical Section at the India Office Records, it is dedicated to his memory.

Sir Penderel Moon, O.B.E., sometime Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, took up his appointment as Assistant Editor in succession to Mr Lumby in September 1972, and has helped to see this volume through the press.

Mr C. G. Costley-White, C.M.G., and Mr D. M. Blake, both of whom joined the Historical Section in March 1968, and Dr L. J. Carter, who came in August 1970, on the retirement of Mr R. W. Mason, C.M.G., have assisted throughout in the assembly, selection and preparation of documents for publication.

The Series will cover the period 1 January 1942 to 15 August 1947. The first volume, carrying the sub-title *The Cripps Mission* was published in 1970; the second, sub-titled '*Quit India*' and carrying the documentary record forward from 30 April to 21 September 1942, and the third on *Reassertion of authority, Gandhi's fast and the succession to the Viceroyalty* and covering the period 21 September 1942–12 June 1943, were both published in 1971.

The principles of selection, the arrangement of documents—which is in chronological order throughout in so far as that has been ascertainable—together with other details of presentation were explained in the Foreword to the First Volume (pp. vi–x) with some further comments on particular points being added in the Foreword to Volume III (pp. viii–xii). There is no need, therefore, to recapitulate what has been written on these matters here. It may, however, be worth while restating the purpose of the Series. It is to make available to scholars in convenient printed form the more important British historical records relating to the Transfer of Power in India.

N. MANSERGH

Historical Section
India Office Records
March 1973

[4] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 749, Written Answers to Questions, cols. 147–8.
[5] His book entitled *The Transfer of Power in India* was published in 1954.

Introduction to Volume IV

'It has been a very long spell of office, and a very heavy one', wrote Lord Linlithgow on 4 October 1943 [No. 156] in what was to be his last weekly letter as Viceroy to the Secretary of State. He had no doubts about the value of their extended correspondence. Lord Curzon, he reminded Amery, had noted that it was in the correspondence between Viceroy and Secretary of State that the real history of a régime was to be found and his own experience led him to endorse that judgement. 'It is only in that correspondence', he wrote, 'that one can record with entire frankness for the benefit of the Secretary of State the daily ups and downs of the situation here; the clashes of personalities; the emergence of new figures; and the signs of danger ahead.' The Secretary of State, in what he described as 'the first epistle of Leo the apostle to Archie the pro-consul', told the incoming Viceroy on 21 October 1943, that his weekly letters would be more in the nature of filling gaps in telegraphic correspondence than 'a connected survey or diary of events'. In his case they consisted chiefly of 'a certain amount of thinking aloud on the main topics of the day, supplemented by paragraphs on specific questions'[1] [No. 183].

Of 'dangers ahead', the outgoing Viceroy discounted the political, at least in terms of immediacy. On 19 July [No. 53] he had confirmed the Secretary of State's impression that 'politically the position is very easy here at the moment. The fact is that none of these people know what to do. The Muslim League have no wish to do anything, the Congress are completely at a loss; the Princes, Depressed Classes, and the minorities, have nothing to gain by activity . . .' On 4 October he further remarked that 'the so-called deadlock on the political stage . . . causes no emotion in this country', where 'one hardly ever sees a reference' in the Press to the jailed Congress Working Committee and where 'Gandhi is equally out of the way of doing mischief'; and where, by contrast, the Muslims, 'who have immensely strengthened their position during the last 3 or 4 years, are solid; more bitterly communal than ever; and as intensely suspicious both of the Hindus and of the possibility that His Majesty's Government may compromise with the Hindus'. But he was 'very unhappy' about inflation and 'definitely disturbed' about the food position, responsibility for which must needs be passed on to his successor, 'though by the time he takes over we shall have bought a great deal of the experience that I suspect always has to be bought in handling a situation of this sort, and shall have made, I trust, the bulk of our mistakes' [No. 156].

Meanwhile the Viceroy-designate, Lord Wavell, was engaged in policy discussions in London. On 7 September the Secretary of State listed [No. 101] as

[1] The nature and status of communications between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy are reviewed in minutes and exchanges of letters reprinted in the Appendix to this Volume.

major questions for such discussions, economic and social reconstruction in India, any far-reaching advance for which he felt would have to originate from the centre; an Indian constitution, which 'must come from Indians themselves'; and the best way of proceeding in the meantime with the further Indianisation of the existing constitution on the hypothesis that what might have to be met was 'Indian nationalism rather than Indian democracy *à l'anglaise*'—the last being a favoured theme of the Secretary of State who continued throughout the period, despite indications of Viceregal scepticism, to urge the relevance of Swiss experience of a non-party executive, independent of the legislature, to Indian conditions [Nos. 46, 70, 103, 117, 550].

Wavell formulated his views on Indian policy in a memorandum [Enclosure to No. 116] which was submitted to the War Cabinet Committee on India on 15 September. The Viceroy-designate observed that, for his part, he could see 'no half-way house between an official Government and a Government of political leadership, the one incapable and the other capable of initiative in the political and constitutional field'. He felt continuance of the former, implying 'inaction and no change in the present Government' had many short-term advantages but that it carried the longer-term liability that 'we shall end the war and attend the Peace Conference with India sullen and resentful, and determined to get out of the British Commonwealth as soon as possible'. Without discounting the risks, Wavell accordingly recommended the establishment of a Coalition Government at the Centre by direct appeal to the principal party leaders, not indeed immediately but when suitable opportunity arose. After consideration, the Cabinet Committee on India [Nos. 120, 135, 152, 155, 159–60], with one dissentient, advised the adoption of this course in principle, but the Prime Minister on 6 October circulated a Memorandum to the Cabinet [No. 165] arguing that there 'could hardly be a less suitable time for raising again the political agitation on its old and well-known lines, and for trying to form a responsible Government based in the main on Gandhi . . . the injury to our war effort . . . and to the internal peace of India might be most grievous. The fact that a new Viceroy is going out to India affords no reason for running such risks.' And he concluded: 'Victory is the best foundation for great constitutional departures.' On 8 October the War Cabinet approved a directive [Enclosure to No. 172] to the Viceroy-designate indicating that his first duty would be the defence of India; and that he should also concern himself with economic development, the easing of communal differences and with 'the establishment of a self-governing India as an integral member of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations', which remained 'our inflexible policy'. He was given leave to make 'as occasion warrants, any proposals which you consider may achieve that end'; and was told that he need not 'be deterred from making such proposals by the fact that the war is still proceeding'; but was warned, finally, to 'beware above all

things' of undue concentration on political issues lest that be to the prejudice of India's war effort.

The Cabinet directive of 8 October provided the guide-lines for the remainder of the period covered by this volume. It discouraged political initiatives on the part of the Viceroy and while it is evident that Wavell from time to time irked against the rigorous interpretation placed upon it by the War Cabinet, and especially by the Prime Minister, his attention on the political side was chiefly directed to sustaining and, if possible, enhancing the position of the Government of India, which *inter alia* led him first to seek approval for the appointment of an Indian to succeed Sir Jeremy Raisman as Finance Member [Nos. 244, 256, 260–1, 268, 270, 282, 286, 289] and secondly to recommend Ministerial status for the Indian Agent-General in Washington [Nos. 183, 213, 241, 285, 341, 424, 475]—something which Linlithgow had previously opposed [Vol. III, No. 62]. The Secretary of State supported both these proposals but the War Cabinet agreed to neither [Nos. 304, 532, 623]. On the longer term the attempts of the Viceroy and some of the Governors to assess possible changes in the political balance in India were of unusual interest.

The growing strength of the Muslim League was seemingly accepted as one significant factor, the Viceroy commenting in January 1944, that while the extreme nature of some of Jinnah's pronouncements were to be taken as part of his stock in trade, it was clear also that for the time being, Jinnah was not 'going to sell out on a rising market' [No. 344]. There are, no doubt partly for this reason, indications of particular watchfulness in respect of Muslim League policies in the Punjab [Nos. 49, 55] while the dispute which arose between the Muslim League and the Punjab Unionist Ministry in April and May 1944 caused both Viceroy and Governor evident concern [Nos. 460, 461, 477, 503]. By contrast the Congress, its leaders interned, had little freedom of manœuvre. Yet, as the Governor of Bombay, Sir John Colville, noted on 13 March [No. 429], the Congress 'cannot be conjured away' but would have to be reckoned with when the time came for British commitments to India to be fulfilled after the war, and its leaders by implication ought, therefore, to have some opportunity in the meantime of reconsidering their position together. This was a course which Gandhi, in a different context, also had urged upon the Government of India [No. 188]. The Governor of the Central Provinces, Sir Henry Twynam, however, in an appreciation dated February 1944 [Enclosure to No. 462], advised that no further 'appeasement' of the Congress should be attempted, that 'a firm stand should be taken on the principles of the Cripps offer and an attempt should be made to rally to the support of Government the Muslim League' by 'some inclination of the ear to Muslim demands . . .' 'Once Gandhi understands', concluded the Governor, 'that H.M.G. will not be frightened out of the principle of self-determination for the Muslim areas, a more realistic approach to the problem may be expected from the Congress.'

The Viceroy did not endorse either the premises or the conclusion of Twynam's analysis. In his own *Note on the Political Situation in India*, dated April 1944 and subsequently circulated to the War Cabinet [Enclosure to No. 507], he saw little hope of forming a Centre Government party which would command popular support and a majority in the legislature for the present, though he thought it might possibly develop. Such a government, he felt, might have to enlist the support of the Muslim League but 'it would not be easy to negotiate with Jinnah except on the basis of recognising Pakistan more explicitly than the Cripps offer does'. He concluded: 'I am afraid I can see no clearer policy than to work towards a Central party with more popular support than the present Government, and to await events. I do not see any prospect at present of forming a body to consider the constitutional problem, whose opinions would carry any weight in India, and I do not think it worth while to attempt to do so.'

In late April a new factor was introduced into the political equation, the consequences of which in time led the Viceroy to qualify his conclusion. It was first introduced in a proposal from the Government of India itself [Nos. 463 and 479] that the War Cabinet should assent to Gandhi's transfer from the Aga Khan's Palace at Poona to Ahmednagar, where *inter alia* he would have had access to his Congress colleagues, a proposition which elicited somewhat ambivalent comment from the Secretary of State in a paper circulated to the War Cabinet [No. 492] but which on balance was thought to be advantageous; and then there followed a sudden deterioration in Gandhi's health, which persuaded the Viceroy to release him immediately, the Home Department's interpretation of the doctors' opinion being that 'Gandhi is never likely to be active factor in politics again' [No. 496]. The Cabinet acquiesced, the Prime Minister noting 'it is of course understood that there will be no negotiations between him [Gandhi] and the Viceroy' [Nos. 498 and 500]. By 23 May the Viceroy, in giving an account of Gandhi's activities, wrote of him as 'certainly on the mend' though not yet 'dangerously well' [No. 515], while on 5 July Churchill made a forthrightly phrased enquiry of the Viceroy as to how Gandhi's resumption of an active role in politics squared with earlier medical reports [No. 567]—without, however, causing the Viceroy to retreat from his view that the initial decision on release had been correct [No. 570].

Gandhi's interest on his return to the political arena was reported as being apparently concentrated on two things. The first was the possibility of forming a common front with Jinnah on the basis of a conditional and partial concession of Pakistan, as adumbrated over a period of time by Rajagopalachari [Nos. 573, 574, 576], and conceding a right to ' "contiguous districts in N.W. and N.E. India," where the Moslem population has an absolute majority . . . to decide by plebiscite for or against separation' [No. 590]. This possibility, which elicited from the Hindu Mahasabha an emphatic condemnation of 'Gandhiji's proposal to vivisect India allowing Moslems to form separate independent states'

[No. 604], is not on official record as having been precisely formulated at any point by Gandhi. It was in any event deemed by him, though seemingly not by the Secretary of State [No. 590], to be separate from his second proposition, which was a demand for a National Government with full control of civil administration, composed of persons chosen by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly with the Viceroy 'like the King of England' guided by responsible Ministers.

Jinnah responded to the first of the two propositions by expressing willingness to receive proposals from Gandhi direct, but not to take the initiative in respect of them, with the result that the possibility of talks between the two leaders languished until the autumn [Nos. 581, 590, 593]. With regard to the second, the Viceroy was not clear as to why Gandhi's proposals for a ' "National Government" were so drawn as to be manifestly unacceptable to His Majesty's Government' [No. 593]. However, in a letter dated 15 July [No. 584], Gandhi drew the Viceroy's attention to his (Gandhi's) statements in the Press which, he said, had received premature publicity and 'were meant primarily to be shown to you' and reiterated his earlier request [No. 539] to see the Working Committee and the Viceroy. The Viceroy replied on 22 July in terms similar to those he had earlier used [No. 544] and to the effect that if Gandhi would submit 'a definite and constructive policy I shall be glad to consider it' [No. 597]. In response Gandhi proposed that if a declaration of immediate independence were made and a National Government formed subject to the continuance of existing control over military operations, the Congress should give full cooperation in the War effort [No. 614]. Friendly talks, he also suggested, should take the place of correspondence if there were a desire on the part of the British Government for a settlement.

The Viceroy felt that his reply to this further communication should go beyond 'blank refusal' of Gandhi's proposals and 'give impression that His Majesty's Government are receptive and anxious to promote a settlement'. He sent a draft on these lines accordingly to the Secretary of State for approval by the War Cabinet [Nos. 613 and 615]. The India Committee substantially revised the Viceroy's draft [No. 622] but even so the War Cabinet [No. 623], feeling that it 'should be stiffer and less forthcoming in tone', suggested further amendments of substance and agreed upon resubmission, the Prime Minister thereafter informing the Viceroy: 'We are much concerned at the negotiations which you have got into with Gandhi who was released on the medical advice that he would not again be able to take part in active politics' [No. 624]. The Viceroy rejoined that there was 'no question of negotiations at present. I am merely informing Gandhi of the position repeatedly stated by His Majesty's Government in the Cripps offer and since', adding that it had not been possible to ignore medical opinions and, more important, that he had been 'guided throughout by your directive of October 8th' [No. 626]. After further

consideration by the India Committee and the War Cabinet [Nos. 628 and 629], amendments were introduced into the original draft making explicit reference to the need of the British Government 'to ensure fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the depressed classes, and their Treaty obligations to the Indian States' [No. 629]. The Viceroy voiced objection to the revised draft on the ground that it would destroy hopes of ending the political deadlock [No. 636]. Thereafter the debate gathered momentum [Nos. 641–4, 646–59], the Secretary of State generally supporting the Viceroy's contentions in Cabinet but none the less evidently relieved that the Viceroy should have avoided 'a direct collision with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on an issue, not of real substance, but of tone and wording' [No. 664]. Amery, moreover, alleged that on such matters the Cabinet were 'overborne by the Prime Minister's vehemence' and that the Prime Minister made difficulties because he 'passionately hopes that any solution involving the fulfilment of our pledges can still somehow or other be prevented . . .' However explained, it emerged from the extraordinarily detailed consideration given to the terms of the Viceroy's reply to Gandhi's letter that in a broad sense the Viceroy was persuaded that some progress in the political field might now be possible whereas the War Cabinet were not convinced that this was so.

The volume is dominated, however, not by politics and the constitutional question but by food, or to be precise, by the scarcity of it. Here there is a recurrent theme—the need for a larger share of food than hitherto to be imported into India and of scarce allied shipping to carry it thither. The dreadful climax of the Bengal famine comes early in the Volume, its imminence foreshadowed by the Governor who on 2 July, belatedly by his own qualified admission, wrote to the Viceroy, 'I must invoke all my powers of description and persuasion to convey to you the seriousness of the food situation in Bengal' [No. 27]; something of its devastating impact recorded graphically by the Acting Governor and the new Viceroy in October and November; its exposure of the inability of the Provincial Government and its administration to cope with a crisis of such magnitude made manifest with enquiries into possible remedies and allocation of responsibility.

The documents reveal that the Viceroy, with his experience of trying to mitigate the effects of one famine in his first weeks of office and fears of another, consistently declined to accept the War Cabinet's conclusions regarding the scale on which food could be shipped to India as final, and *per contra* returned time and again to challenge them. 'It is quite clear to me', he wrote on 12 January 1944 to the Secretary of State, 'that throughout 1944 I shall have a hard struggle to hold prices and to stave off shortages and actual famine. I may not be able to prove this to the satisfaction of the War Cabinet, but the facts are quite evident here. Please tell your colleagues that they have been warned' [No. 321]. A month later after further discouragement, as he deemed it to be,

the Viceroy even more emphatically warned 'His Majesty's Government with all seriousness that if they refuse our demands they are risking a catastrophe of far greater dimensions than [the] Bengal famine that will have [an] irretrievable effect on their position at home and abroad. They must either trust the opinion of the man they have appointed to advise them on Indian affairs or replace him' [No. 364].

The documentation relating to the famine in particular and to food supplies for India throughout the period is grouped in one substantial Chapter—Chapter 4—in the Summary of Documents. The account thus given is so closely knit that it requires to be examined as a whole. The selection of documents, however, presented certain problems which should be mentioned. As between New Delhi and London, the Viceroy–Secretary of State correspondence, i.e. the exchange of telegrams and weekly letters between them, provides a consecutive narrative framework with no decision of importance unrecorded in it. In one respect, however, such documentation would have been deficient. It would not at all times have provided an adequate description of the actual process of decision-making or of the multiplicity of factors involved in it. For that reason a selection of minutes and papers of the War Cabinet, the Chiefs of Staff and the Indian Foodgrain Requirements Committee, together with other related papers (notably correspondence among ministers including the Prime Minister) has also been included. These papers provide convenient summaries of the arguments used and the statistical evidence supporting them. Viewing the problem in the context of demands and shortages in many parts of the world, they give at least some indication of the complexity of the competing claims—including those of the armed forces in India—on overseas food supplies and scarce shipping. Finally, it may be pointed out that, in addition to the documentation included in this volume, there remains in the India Office Records a very substantial body of material of great value to a study in depth of the Indian food crisis of 1943–4 but which clearly lies outside the scope of the *Transfer of Power* theme.

Second to the problem of selection of material originating in New Delhi or London is that of documenting a famine that in its most severe manifestations was provincial. Here the principle applied in selection of documents for the Series as a whole has been sustained in this volume and provincial records are reprinted only when they contain material of more than provincial and, preferably, of all-India interest. But in view of the pressing problems of Bengal, the alleged inadequacy or partial breakdown of its administration, the preoccupation of Viceroy, Secretary of State and Cabinet with its affairs and the exceptional measures that were taken, including the appointment of an Australian Governor, R. G. Casey, with wide wartime political and administrative experience to cope with them, there is a more substantial selection of provincial material than has been included in earlier volumes. Material relating

to provincial administration and politics is grouped under Chapter 5 of the Summary of Documents.

The Famine and continuing food shortages focused attention more sharply on social, economic and financial questions, with the inflationary process during the War and the balance of payments thereafter remaining principal preoccupations, and post-war reconstruction, to which the Viceroy evidently attached very considerable importance, being made the special responsibility of an additional Member of the Executive Council, namely Sir Ardeshir Dalal, one of the authors of the 'Bombay Plan' of Economic Development for India. The evidence relating to these matters is grouped under Chapter 7 in the Summary of Documents. Consideration was given both to immediate reinforcement of wartime administration and to post-war recruitment for the I.C.S. [Nos. 249, 253, 271]. In respect of the Princes there is evidence of misgivings on the part both of Viceroy and Secretary of State in respect of the feasibility of maintaining H.M.G.'s obligations to the Indian States in a new Constitution [Chapter 6]. Externally, the Government of India sent representatives to attend the Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting, 1944 [No. 332], an exchange of High Commissioners with Australia took place [No. 519] and one with Canada was further pursued [Nos. 420 and 449]. There was evidence of continuing sensitivity to United States views on the Indian problem and in July–August there appear first strong reactions to the disclosure by Drew Pearson of the reputed text of an official communication from W. Phillips to President Roosevelt which was highly critical of the Government of India. All of these matters are included in Chapter 8 of the Summary of Documents.

By far the greater part of the hitherto unpublished documents included in this volume, as in its predecessors, are drawn either from the official archives of the India Office in the custody of the India Office Records or until October 1943 from the Linlithgow Collection in the India Office Library.

The documents reproduced from the India Office Records are from the following series:

L/E/8	Economic and Overseas Department Files
L/E/9	Economic and Overseas Department Collections
L/F/7	Financial Department Collections
L/I/1	Information Department Files
L/PO	Private Office Papers
L/P&J/5	Governors' Reports
L/P&J/7	Political Department Files
L/P&J/8	Political Department Collections
L/P&S/12	External Department Collections
L/P&S/13	Political 'Internal' Department Collections
L/S&G/7	Services and General Department Collections

L/WS/1 War Staff Files
R/3/2 Bengal Governor's Secretariat Files

Every document in these series is referred to in the text by the appropriate series notation followed by the number assigned to the particular file, collection, or volume in which the document is filed or bound. Thus the notation L/P&J/8/600 refers to the six-hundredth file in the series called Political Department Collections. Each document in a file, collection, or volume is identified by a folio reference.

The Linlithgow Collection consists of the papers of the second Marquess of Linlithgow as Viceroy and Governor-General of India which the present Marquess deposited on permanent loan in the India Office Library in 1964. The documents from this Collection which are published here are almost all drawn from the series of volumes of the Viceroy's correspondence. Each of these volumes is divided into two sections, the first containing correspondence (letters and telegrams) addressed to the Viceroy, the second, correspondence from him. Within each section, correspondence is, with some exceptions, in chronological sequence. Documents from the Linlithgow Collection are referred to in the present volume by the catalogue number of the Collection (*MSS. EUR. F.125*) followed by the number of the relevant volume.

The Editors wish to thank the present Marquess of Linlithgow for permission to use the Linlithgow papers.

By courtesy of the Countess Wavell, C.I., Lady Pamela Humphrys, Lady Felicity Longmore and Lady Joan Gordon, the Historical Section of the India Office Records has been allowed to consult four printed volumes of the Wavell Papers. Documents from these volumes of which the India Office Records have otherwise no copy have been included, their source being indicated in the relevant heading. Furthermore, where a copy of a telegram can be found in both the Wavell Papers and the India Office Records, the two texts have been compared and any significant discrepancy between them has been annotated. But it is to be noted that in all such cases, for reasons of convenience, it is the copy in the India Office Records, whether it is the sender's or recipient's version, that has been reproduced.[2]

Some documents which are not in any of these archives have been obtained from elsewhere, notably the Cabinet Office.[3]

The most important categories of telegraphic communications between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy were classified in the following ways. One category of telegrams from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State carried the letter 'S', or 'S.C.' if the Viceroy was at Simla or in Camp, i.e. on tour. Another category consisted of 'U' telegrams, which were reserved for the most secret and personal matters, the letter 'U' indicating the nature of the telegram,

[2] Cf. Volume I, p. ix, penultimate sentence.

[3] A file (R/30/1/4) containing copies of these documents can be consulted in the India Office Records.

irrespective of whether it did, or did not, carry a 'Secret' or 'Private and Personal' prefix. 'U' telegrams could be enciphered or deciphered only in the Private Offices of the Secretary of State or the Viceroy. Telegrams in the Superintendent series indicated to Superintendents of Telegraph branches that especial care should be taken to safeguard their security. Certain changes in the channels of communication between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State made at the beginning of Lord Wavell's Viceroyalty may be studied in the Appendix to this Volume.

It was the practice of Lord Linlithgow when Viceroy to comment with some frequency, and of Lord Wavell more occasionally, in the margin of incoming letters from the Secretary of State or reports from the Governors of the Provinces of British India for the guidance of the Private Secretary to the Viceroy (P.S.V.) or at times, it would seem, for his personal satisfaction. These marginal comments are reproduced in italics so as to distinguish them from the main text.

In conclusion the Editors desire to acknowledge once again the friendly assistance and advice they have received from the officials at the India Office Library and Records, among whom they would like to mention Mr S. C. Sutton, C.B.E., F.S.A., Director until his retirement in September 1972, and Miss Joan C. Lancaster, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.Soc., his successor in that office; from the Editors of the *Documents on British Foreign Policy*; and from the Historical Adviser to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Mr Rohan Butler, C.M.G.

N. MANSERGH

Abbreviations

A.D.C.	Aide de Camp
A.-I.C.C.	All-India Congress Committee
A.O.C.-in-C.	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief
A.P.I.	Associated Press of India
A.P.S.V.	Assistant Private Secretary to the Viceroy
A.R.P.	Air Raid Precautions
B.I.S.	British Information Services
B.O.R.	British Other Ranks
C.H.	Companion of Honour
C.I.D.	Criminal Investigation Department *or* Committee of Imperial Defence
C.I.G.S.	Chief of the Imperial General Staff
C.-in-C.	Commander-in-Chief
C.I.O.	Central Intelligence Officer
C.O.S.	Chiefs of Staff
C.P.	Central Provinces
C.P.I.	Communist Party of India
C.P.O.	Central Provision Office
C.S.R.	Civil Service Regulations
D.C.G.S.	Deputy Chief of the General Staff
D.G.I.M.S.	Director General Indian Medical Service
D.I.B.	Director of the Intelligence Bureau
D.I.G.	Deputy Inspector General (of Police)
D.I.R.	Defence of India Rules
D.P.H.	Director of Public Health
D.P.S.V.	Deputy Private Secretary to the Viceroy
E.C.O.	Emergency Commissioned Officer
E.H.&L.Dept.	Education Health and Lands Department
E.P.T.	Excess Profits Tax
F.E.	Far East
F.E.B.	Far Eastern Bureau of the Ministry of Information
F.O.	Foreign Office
F.O.C.R.I.N.	Flag Officer Commanding Royal Indian Navy
G.C.I.E.	Knight Grand Commander of the Indian Empire
G.H.Q.	General Headquarters
G.M.T.	Greenwich Mean Time
G.O.C.-in-C.	General Officer Commanding-in-Chief
H.D.	Home Department
H.E.V.	His Excellency the Viceroy
H.M.G.	His Majesty's Government

I.A.	Indian Army
I.B.	Intelligence Bureau
I.C.I.	Imperial Chemical Industries
I.C.S.	Indian Civil Service
I.F.Cttee	Indian Finance Committee (of the War Cabinet)
I.G.	Inspector General (of Police)
I.G.H.	Indian General Hospital
I.G.P.	Inspector General of Police
I.I.L.	Indian Independence League (at Singapore or Bangkok)
I.M.S.	Indian Medical Service
I.N.A.	Indian National Army
I.P.	Indian Police
I.P.C.	Indian Penal Code
I.S.T.	Indian Standard Time
J.P.C.	Joint Parliamentary Committee
K.L.M.	Koninklijke Luchtvaart Maatschappij (Royal Dutch Airlines)
L. of C.	Lines of Communication
L.S.G.	Local Self-Government Department
M.E.	Middle East
M.L.A.	Member of the Legislative Assembly
M.O.I.	Ministry of Information
M.T.	Motor Transport *or* Military Transport
M.W.T.	Ministry of War Transport
N.D.C.	National Defence Council
N.-W.F.P.	North-West Frontier Province
N.Z.	New Zealand
O.C.T.U.	Officer Cadet Training Unit
P.A.O.C.	Principal Administrative Officers Committee
P.&P.	Private and Personal
P.C.S.	Provincial Civil Service
P.M.	Prime Minister
P.S.O.	Principal Staff Officer
P.S.V.	Private Secretary to the Viceroy
P.W.D.	Public Works Department
Q.M.G.	Quartermaster General
R.A.F.	Royal Air Force
R.F.C.	Regional Food Controller
R.I.N.	Royal Indian Navy
R.N.	Royal Navy
R.N.R.	Royal Naval Reserve
R.N.V.R.	Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve
R.T.C.	Round Table Conference

S.A.	South Africa
S.A.C.S.E.A.	Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia
S.B.	Special Branch
S.D.O.	Sub-Divisional Officer
S.E.A.C.	South East Asia Command
S. of S. *or* S/S	Secretary of State
U.K.	United Kingdom
U.N.R.R.A.	United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration
U.P.	United Provinces
U.S.S.R.	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

Principal Holders of Office

United Kingdom

WAR CABINET

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury, Minister of Defence	Mr Winston S. Churchill
Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs until 28 Sept. 1943; Deputy Prime Minister and Lord President of the Council from 28 Sept. 1943	Mr Clement Attlee
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Leader of the House of Commons	Mr Anthony Eden
Lord President of the Council until 28 Sept. 1943; Chancellor of the Exchequer from 28 Sept. 1943	Sir John Anderson
Minister of Labour and National Service	Mr Ernest Bevin
Minister of Production	Mr Oliver Lyttelton
Secretary of State for the Home Department and Minister of Home Security	Mr Herbert Morrison
Minister of Reconstruction (from 12 Nov. 1943)	Lord Woolton
Minister of State in the Middle East (until 23 Dec. 1943)	Mr R. G. Casey

Viscount Halifax (Earl, July 1944), British Ambassador to the United States since Jan. 1941, remaining a Member of the War Cabinet

OTHER MINISTERS MENTIONED IN THIS VOLUME

Chancellor of the Exchequer	Sir Kingsley Wood (died 21 Sept. 1943)
Lord Chancellor	Viscount Simon
Lord Privy Seal until 28 Sept. 1943; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs from 28 Sept. 1943	Viscount Cranborne
Secretary of State for India and for Burma	Mr L. S. Amery
Secretary of State for the Colonies	Colonel Oliver Stanley

First Lord of the Admiralty	Mr A. V. Alexander
Secretary of State for War	Sir James Grigg
Secretary of State for Air	Sir Archibald Sinclair
Minister of Aircraft Production	Sir Stafford Cripps
President of the Board of Education (became Minister of Education by Education Act, 1944)	Mr R. A. Butler
Minister of War Transport	Lord Leathers
Minister of Food	Lord Woolton Colonel J. J. Llewellin (from 12 Nov. 1943)
Minister of Information	Mr Brendan Bracken
Paymaster-General	Lord Cherwell

CHIEFS OF STAFF

Chief of the Imperial General Staff	General Sir Alan Brooke (Field Marshal from 1 Jan. 1944)
Chief of the Air Staff	Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal (Marshal of the R.A.F. from 1 Jan. 1944)
First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff	Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham (from 4 Oct. 1943)

INDIA OFFICE

Secretary of State	Mr L. S. Amery During his illness (*circa* 2 Feb.–1 Mar. 1944) Mr R. A. Butler took charge of the Office
Permanent Under-Secretary	Sir David Monteath
Parliamentary Under-Secretary	Earl of Munster
Deputy Under-Secretaries	Sir William Croft (until 30 Sept. 1943 when lent to Treasury) Sir Cecil Kisch
Assistant Under-Secretaries	Mr P. J. Patrick Sir LeonardWakely (until 14 Oct. 1943) Mr G. H. Baxter (from 22 July 1943)
Private Secretary to Secretary of State	Mr F. F. Turnbull

India

Viceroy, Governor-General and Crown Representative	The Marquess of Linlithgow Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (from 20 Oct. 1943)
Private Secretary to the Viceroy	Sir Gilbert Laithwaite Mr Evan Jenkins (from 20 Oct. 1943; K.C.I.E., Jan.1944)
Reforms Commissioner	Mr V. P. Menon
Adviser to the Viceroy on War Administration	Sir Archibald Rowlands (from Oct. 1943)

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Commander-in-Chief	General Sir Claude Auchinleck (assumed charge of office 20 June 1943)
Home	Sir Reginald Maxwell I.C.S. (until 4 April 1944) Sir R. F. Mudie I.C.S. (assumed charge of office 23 July 1944, Sir John Thorne I.C.S. acting 4 April–22 July 1944)
Finance	Sir Jeremy Raisman I.C.S.
War Transport	Sir Edward Benthall
Posts and Air	Sir Mahomed Usman
Education, Health, and Lands	Sir Jogendra Singh
Commerce, Food, and Industries and Civil Supplies (became Commerce, and Industries and Civil Supplies 11 Aug. 1943)	Sir M. Azizul Haque
Food	Sir J. P. Srivastava (assumed charge of office 11 Aug. 1943)
Labour	Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar
Law	Sir Asoka Kumar Roy
Indians Overseas (renamed Commonwealth Relations 30 March 1944)	Dr N. B. Khare
Information and Broadcasting	Sir Sultan Ahmed
Supply	Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar (remained in London as one of India's representatives at War Cabinet until 27 July 1943)

Civil Defence	Sir J. P. Srivastava (until 15 Sept. 1943 when portfolio was merged with Defence)
Defence	Sir Firoz Khan Noon (Sir Mahomed Usman acted during Sir Firoz Khan Noon's absence in London)
Planning and Development	Sir Ardeshir Dalal (assumed charge of office 1 Aug. 1944)

Sir Firoz Khan Noon and the Maharaja of Kashmir served as India's representatives at the War Cabinet from April 1944. They returned to India July–Aug. 1944.

GOVERNORS OF PROVINCES

Madras	Capt. The Hon. Sir Arthur Hope
Bombay	Sir John Colville
Bengal	Lt. Col. Sir John Herbert (resigned 18 Oct. 1943). Sir Thomas Rutherford I.C.S. acting 6 Sept. 1943–21 Jan. 1944 Rt. Hon. R. G. Casey (from 22 Jan. 1944)
United Provinces	Sir Maurice Hallett I.C.S.
Punjab	Sir Bertrand Glancy I.C.S.
Central Provinces and Berar	Sir Henry Twynam I.C.S.
Assam	Sir Andrew Clow I.C.S.
Bihar	Sir Thomas Rutherford I.C.S. (Mr R. F. Mudie I.C.S. acting 6 Sept. 1943–24 April 1944)
North-West Frontier Province	Sir George Cunningham I.C.S.
Orissa	Sir William Hawthorne Lewis I.C.S.
Sind	Sir Hugh Dow I.C.S.

PRIME MINISTERS OF PROVINCES

Bengal	Sir Nazimuddin
Punjab	Malik Khizar Hyat Khan
Assam	Sir Muhammad Saadulla

North-West Frontier Province	Sardar Muhammad Aurangzeb Khan
Orissa	Maharaja of Parlakimedi (resigned 29 June 1944)
Sind	Sir Ghulam Hussain Hidayatullah

The remaining Provinces were administered by their Governors under Section 93 of the Government of India Act 1935.

Chronological Table of Principal Events

1943

June	
19	Announcement of Wavell's appointment as Viceroy and Auchinleck's as C.-in-C., India
July	
10	Allied invasion of Sicily
15	G. of I. informs Amery of estimated deficit of 1·29 million tons on future food requirements
25	Mussolini falls
August	
2	Linlithgow's Farewell Address to Central Legislature
4	Churchill leaves for First Quebec Conference (19–24 August)
10	Announcement of Srivastava's appointment to separate food portfolio
25	Announcement of Mountbatten's appointment as Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia
September	
1	Churchill arrives in Washington
8	Italian surrender announced
19	Churchill returns to U.K.
21	Publication of All-India Foodgrains Policy Committee Report (Gregory Report) recommending annual food imports of one million tons with additional 500,000 tons in first year for reserve
October	
8	War Cabinet approves directive to Wavell
20	Wavell installed as Viceroy
22	Resignation of Herbert as Governor of Bengal announced
26–28	Wavell visits Bengal
November	
4	Commons debate Indian food situation
6	Russians capture Kiev
12	Churchill leaves for Cairo and Teheran Conferences (23 November–6 December)
19–20	Governors' Conference meets in New Delhi
December	
20	Wavell speaks to Associated Chambers of Commerce, Calcutta

December

24 Appointment of Casey as Governor of Bengal announced

24–27 Muslim League Session at Karachi

1944

January

10 Allies capture Maungdaw

18 Churchill returns to U.K. from North Africa

February

4 Japanese begin offensive directed at Ngakyedauk Pass

17 Wavell's Address to Central Legislature

March

21 India (Attachment of States) Bill receives Royal Assent

30 Japanese besiege Imphal Plain

April

4 Japanese attack Kohima

7–8 Non-Party Leaders' Conference, Lucknow

18 Allies relieve Kohima

May

1–16 Dominion Prime Ministers meet in London

6 Gandhi released from detention

17 Allies begin attack on Myitkyina

22 Allies relieve Imphal Plain

27 Meeting of Muslim League Committee of Action in Lahore expels Khizar Hyat Khan

June

1 Announcement of Dalal's appointment to new Planning and Development portfolio

6 Allied invasion of Normandy begins

21 G. of I. publishes *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944*

24 Appointment of Famine Inquiry Commission announced

July

10 Rajagopalachari publishes correspondence with Jinnah on his formula for a Congress–Muslim League settlement

12 Gandhi holds press conference to clarify his proposals for a National Government

27 Gandhi sends Wavell letter outlining his 'concrete proposal'

28 Commons debate India

29–30 All-India Muslim League Working Committee and Council meets in Lahore

August

11	Churchill arrives in Italy
15	Wavell replies to Gandhi's proposals
23	Paris liberated
29	Churchill returns to U.K.
29–31	Governors' Conference meets in New Delhi

Summary of Documents

The documents in this as in preceding volumes are arranged chronologically but in order to assist readers who desire to follow the documentary record through on a particular subject, the Summary which follows is divided into Chapters, each with a title indicating its principal contents.

Chapter		*Page*
1	The close of the old Viceroyalty: 15 June to 7 October 1943	xxxii
2	The New Viceroyalty—policy discussions in London; attitudes towards Congress and the Muslim League; Executive Council Membership: 1 September 1943 to 16 April 1944	xxxvi
3	The New Viceroyalty—Gandhi's release; subsequent consideration of policy: 18 April to 31 August 1944	xlv
4	The Bengal Famine and India's demand for food imports	lv
5	Administration and politics in the Provinces (including Bengal and its Governorship)	lxx
6	The Indian States	lxxxii
7	Inflation; sterling balances; reconstruction	lxxxv
8	External relations	xci
Appendix		xcix

CHAPTER I

The close of the old Viceroyalty: 15 June to 7 October 1943

	Name and number	*Date (June)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
1	Amery to Churchill Letter	15	Reports discussion with Wavell and hopes he will be created a Viscount	1
2	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 85th Conclusions, Minute 6 Confidential Annex	15	The Viceroyalty and System of Command	1
3	Churchill to Auchinleck Tel. 16-U via India Office and Viceroy	16	Offers him post of C.-in-C., India; informs him of Wavell's appointment and of the proposed S.E. Asia command	5
4	Amery to Bracken Letter	16	Encloses draft publicity material on Wavell and his appointment	6
7	Churchill to Wavell Letter	17	Expresses confidence in Wavell	11
8	Stephenson to Laithwaite Letter M.-25	18	Reports unconditional release of Mrs I. Gandhi and Mrs Pandit	11
10	Turnbull to Bridges Letter	19	Requests addition to No. 2 of para. noting agreement that no public statement should be made on Wavell's tenure	12
11	Amery to Churchill Letter	19	Reactions to Wavell's and Auchinleck's appointments; Auchinleck's position in relation to frontier operations	13
13	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–7, 10, 19	19–21	Refers to Vol. III, No. 764; Indian reactions to Wavell's appointment; burdens that will fall on him; discussions with Auchinleck; functions of C.-in-C. in Indian constitutional structure; advantages of Auchinleck; S.E. Asia command structure; comments on future Finance and Home Members	14
14	Churchill to Amery Minute M. 400/3	20	Agrees to suggestion in No. 10 and would be prepared to drop all limitations on Wavell's tenure; important all parties should understand new S.E. Asian command structure	22
15	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 23/43	21	Argues Wavell should be created a Viscount and not a Baron	23
16	Note by Turnbull	21	Wavell explains to Amery what Churchill had said about his tenure	24
17	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–5, 12	21	Reactions and reflections on Wavell's and Auchinleck's appointments; advantages of a single Supreme Commander, South East Asia; status of Wavell at Cabinet as Viceroy designate; value of system on Swiss model in Indian conditions	24
18	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 9, 13–15, 18–20, 23	22–6	Refers to Vol. III, No. 758; Gandhi–Jinnah correspondence; command structure; employment of military officers in civil administration; proposal for investigation	27

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June*)		
18	(*cont.*)		into judicial system; assessment of Spens; reduction in size of Indian Army; Gandhi	
21	Amery to Linlithgow Letter	28	S.E. Asia command structure and Roosevelt's acceptance of an inter-allied command; political quietness in India; Linlithgow's homecoming plans	35
22	Wavell to Linlithgow Tel. 689	30	Posts of P.S.V. and D.P.S.V. and possibility of Indian A.P.S.V.	37
		(*July*)		
23	Linlithgow to Wavell Tel. 1421–S	2	Refers to No. 22, approves intention to appoint Jenkins and Abell, but argues case against an Indian A.P.S.V.	37
24	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1422–S	2	Refers to No. 23 and urges Amery to dissuade Wavell from an Indian A.P.S.V.	39
25	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1423–S	2	Sorensen's complaint on alleged non-publication of Gandhi's letter (Vol. II, No. 799)	40
28	Amery to Linlithgow Letter	5	S.E. Asia command; proposed E. Indian military zone; Auchinleck's position; ideal Indian military organisation; Home and Finance memberships; Linlithgow's return	45
29	Linlithgow to Colville Letter	5	Seeks advice as to arrangements should Gandhi fast on the anniversary of his detention	48
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–5, 7, 9, 10, 13	5–6	Delays in the transmission of letters; further reactions to Wavell's and Auchinleck's appointments; Wavell's secretariat; Linlithgow's homecoming; possible fast by Gandhi; session of the National Defence Council; S.E. Asia command; strength of Indian Army	51
31	Colville to Linlithgow Letter, No. 5	9	Submits his recommendations in reply to No. 29	56
34	Jenkins to Laithwaite Letter	12	Encloses note of conversation between Wavell, Amery and Mudaliar	60
35	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2, 4	12	Reactions to Wavell's appointment; Auchinleck's attitude to his relations with S.E. Asia command; preference for triumvirate command structure	63
37	Note by M.I. 2 (a)	14	Recent activities of Subhas Chandra Bose	74
42	Linlithgow to Colville Letter	15	Thanks for No. 31; no truth in rumour that Gandhi has written withdrawing August resolution	80
43	Linlithgow to Provincial Governors Letter	15	Encloses No. 29, summarises reply in No. 31 and asks for views on points raised in No. 29	81
45	Linlithgow to Auchinleck Letter	15	Asks for show of force in certain areas during first ten days of August	83

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*July*)		
46	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–3	15	Linlithgow's homecoming arrangements; policy on publicity during any further fast by Gandhi; value of Swiss model in Indian conditions	84
50	Sarat Bose to Linlithgow Letter	17–24	Discusses situation and requests interview	93
51	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1532–S	18	Announces receipt of letters from Gandhi (a) answering *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances* and (*b*) asking Government to refute rumours of his having written calling off August resolution; and recommends treating (*b*) as secret	96
53	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–5, 8–12, 18	19	S.E. Asia command, relief at dropping of proposal for Ministerial assistant to Viceroy; choice of Supreme Commander; relation of C.-in-C. to Council; Indian political quietness; Gandhi's letters (No. 51 and note 1); Home and Finance Members of Council; McKenzie's letter and statement on Indian political scene	103
54	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 16139	20	Refers to No. 51 and agrees to non-publication of Gandhi's letter; feels may be case for informing Council and awaits Governors' reactions to No. 43	109
57	Moonje to a correspondent in Delhi Letter (extract)	21	Policy of Mahasabha	112
58	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1572–S	26	Replies to No. 54 and suggests answers to possible P.Q.s on subject of Gandhi's letters in No. 51	113
62	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 5–6, 12	27	Gandhi's letters (No. 51 and note 1) and possible P.Q.s thereon; Leaders' Conference statement; assault on Jinnah; Colville's visit; farewell tour; farewell address to combined Legislature	127
64	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 6–7	28	Refers to No. 18, paras. 11–14; relations between Indian executive and judiciary; Mussolini's overthrow	130
		(*August*)		
68	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 5–8, 11–12, 16–19	2–3	Mudaliar; Jenkins' note (No. 34) on discussion between Wavell, Amery and Mudaliar; Gandhi; measures to combat victimisation of services; use of Basic English; farewell address to Legislature; Sarat Bose's letter (No. 50)	141
69	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1637–S	3	Transfer of Food portfolio from Azizul Haque to Srivastava	147
70	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2, 4, 7–9, 11, 14–15	4–9	Refers to Nos. 46 and 64; Linlithgow's homecoming; policy towards further fast by Gandhi; difficulties of applying Swiss system; Amery's answers to P.Q.s on Gandhi's letters; Sarat Bose's	147

	Name and number	*Date (August)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
70	(*cont.*)		internment; proposal to extend jurisdiction of Federal Court; Mudaliar's arrival; Indianisation; relations between executive and judiciary; Indian reactions to overthrow of Mussolini; division of Commerce and Food portfolio	
72	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1, 6–9	5	Linlithgow's farewell speech to Legislature; S.E. Asia Command; future of Raisman, Maxwell, Twynam and Pilditch; missionaries' statement and McKenzie's letter	158
77	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1721–S	12	Complains of failure of propaganda machine following *News Chronicle* article on his farewell address	168
81	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 18359	15	Replies to No. 77 and explains poor reception of Linlithgow's farewell address	171
84	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1783–S	17	Refers to No. 81, will not press matter, but maintains criticisms of Information Dept.	175
85	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 4	17	Policy towards further fast by Gandhi	177
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 10, 13, 17	20–1	Refers to No. 72; Viceroy's farewell tour of Madras; organisation of favourable publicity in U.K. for Indian policy; S.E. Asia Command	180
91	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4–6, 9–10	28–30	Behaviour of Federal Court; tour of Southern India and Bombay; Dr Edward Thompson; Bracken's statement on India	190
		(*September*)		
103	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 3–4, 6, 11–12, 16–17	8	Type of Ministerial government best suited to India; Mountbatten's appointment as Supreme Commander, S.E. Asia; Auchinleck's co-operation with S.E. Asia Command; policy towards further fast by Gandhi; publicity for speeches by Members of Council; surrender of Italy; Linlithgow's farewell meetings	218
107	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 1	10	Release of Indian troops from Middle East	225
117	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1, 4	15	Refers to Nos. 91 and 100; military situation; British parliamentary system not suitable for Provinces	268
126	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2096–S	20	Stresses importance of British Press appreciating dangers of any immediate attempt to break Indian deadlock	285
127	G. of I., Home Dept. to Provincial Govts. Letter 7/5/42–Poll. (I)	20	Activities of Communist Party since removal of ban; recommends neutral attitude towards Party and contact between officials and Party members	286

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*September*)		
129	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 7–8, 11–12	20	Refers to No. 103; Mountbatten's arrival; Auchinleck and S.E. Asia Command; possibility of further fast by Gandhi; reluctance of Members of Council to make speeches	295
137	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 8	23	Wavell's Pilgrims' speech	313
145	Gandhi to Linlithgow Letter	27	Sends him 'a word' on eve of his departure from India	324
		(*October*)		
156	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 12, 14–17, 20–4	4	Mountbatten's arrival; nature of weekly private and personal correspondence; review on his departure of (1) political situation; (2) services and Indianisation	344
157	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 7–9, 12, 16	1	Need for increase of Nordic element in India; Finance Membership; South Rajputana floods; Cabinet changes	353
167	Linlithgow to Gandhi Letter	7	Rejoinder to No. 145	381

CHAPTER 2

The New Viceroyalty—policy discussions in London; attitudes towards Congress and the Muslim League; Executive Council Membership: 1 September 1943 to 16 April 1944

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*September*)		
94	Amery to Wavell Minute	1	Encloses memorandum, drafted early in 1943, on Indian Political Situation concluding that British Government should (1) cease to chase party politicians (2) as an interim measure, strengthen authority of existing Government of India	200
101	Memorandum by Amery	7	Some major problems for discussion	214
108	Note of Interview between Amery and Wavell	? 10	Possibility of political advance and inclusion of party leaders on Executive Council	227
110	Note by Patrick	undated	Considers implications of inclusion of party leaders on Executive Council and offers suggestions thereon	232
114	War Cabinet Committee on India Paper I (43) 1	14	Note by Bridges on re-assembly of Cabinet Committee on India	255
116	War Cabinet Committee on India Paper I (43) 2	15	Memorandum by Amery enclosing memorandum by Wavell asking for guidance on proposals—(1) that H.M.G. should aim at establishing a Coalition Government of party leaders; (2) that he should, when appropriate, issue invitation	256

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*September*)		
116	(*cont.*)		to leaders as in Annexure A; (3) that in the meantime he should make statement as in Annexure B	
120	War Cabinet Committee on India I (43) first meeting	17	Discussion on proposals in No. 116	274
128	Amery to Wavell Letter	20	Encloses suggested amendments for revised draft of No. 116	292
135	War Cabinet Committee on India Paper I (43) 3	23	Memorandum by Amery enclosing revision of Enclosure to No. 116	309
137	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 8	23	Wavell's Pilgrims' speech	313
152	War Cabinet Committee on India I (43) second meeting	29	Discussion of proposals in No. 135	331
		(*October*)		
155	War Cabinet Committee on India Paper I (43) 4	1	Memorandum by Amery enclosing draft memorandum on Indian Policy and, annexed thereto, revise of Annexure B to No. 116 and two drafts of directive to Wavell	340
159	War Cabinet Committee on India I (43) third meeting	4	Discussion of Enclosure to No. 155	365
160	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 436	4	Memorandum by Attlee on Indian Policy enclosing Note of Dissent by Grigg	367
161	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 441	5	Memorandum by Amery enclosing Note on Rajagopalachari and Cripps Offer	370
163	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 442	6	Memorandum by Churchill on Indian Policy circulating extract of letter from Croft	374
164	Speeches by Churchill and Wavell (extract)	6	Speeches at farewell dinner to Wavell	375
165	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 445	6	Memorandum by Churchill on Indian Policy	378
168	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 136th Conclusions	7	Proposed statement by Wavell and approach to Indian political leaders	381
170	Turnbull to Bridges Letter	8	Request by Amery for omission or amendment of No. 168, Conclusion (2)	385
171	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 137th Conclusions Minute 3	8	Approval of Enclosure to No. 172	386
172	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 450 (Revise)	8	Note by Churchill enclosing approved version of 'Directive to the Viceroy Designate'	387
173	Turnbull to Bridges Letter	8	Encloses for Churchill's approval draft statement to be made by Wavell, who wishes to preserve open mind as to desirability of making it	388
183	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 4–5	21	Nature of weekly private and secret letters; merits of Swiss constitution in Indian Provinces; further Indianisation of Executive Council	401
187	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4, 6	25	Linlithgow's greeting; Governors' meeting; Mountbatten	407

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(October)		
188	Gandhi to Secretary, G. of I., Home Dept. Letter	26	Repeats offer to meet Working Committee; suggests *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances* and his reply be referred to impartial tribunal; requests reply should be published in full	408
190	Mudie to Wavell Report D.O. 710–G.B., paras. 3–4	27	Misgivings on policy towards Communist party of India	411
194	Wavell to Amery Tel. 18–U	30	Advises against his suggested visit to India during Christmas recess	416
195	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2403–S	30	Asks him to try to control anti-Indian comment following publication of *India (Food Situation 1943)*	416
		(November)		
199	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 9–12	1–2	Governors' Conference; Gandhi's letter (No. 188); War Purposes Fund; meeting of National Defence Council	430
201	Amery to Wavell Tel. 25063	2	Refers to No. 195; has circularised editors requesting greatest discretion	444
209	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	6	Effects of Viceroy's visit to Bengal on U.K. opinion and likely effects in India	451
213	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 8–10, 14	8	Refers to No. 183; viceregal routine; value of National Defence Council; general political situation; Council's delegation of necessary powers to Supreme Commander; Home and Finance membership; future plans	455
226	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6, 9, PS.	12	No possibility of political initiative at present; no likelihood of his replacement in govt. re-shuffle; Andrews' *Indian Earthquake*	470
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 13	16	Council discussion of proposed Ordinance as substitute for Defence Rule 26	474
231	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1226	18	Informs him of possible move in Commons to urge G. of I. to promote body of Indians or outside experts to make constitutional study; proposes to answer that initiative has been passed to Indians; and seeks his concurrence	479
232	Secretary, G. of I., Home Dept. to Gandhi Letter	18	Refers to No. 188 and rejects offer to meet Working Committee	480
233	Minutes of Governors' Conference (extract)	19	Wavell's opening remarks	480
234	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–7	19	Value of National Defence Council; Home and Finance Memberships	485
235	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2553–S	22	Agrees to line in No. 231 and suggests additional points for debate	488
237	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2562–S	23	Informs him of main conclusions of Governors' Conference	489
238	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2, 4, 7	23–4	Anti-Japanese propaganda; Governors' Conference; Governors' discussions on recruitment to services	489

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(November)		
242	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–6, 9, 11	25	Talk with Smuts on British element in Indian Services; possible provisional constitutional arrangements; success of Governors' Conference; possibility of Amery's replacement in govt. re-shuffle	501
244	Wavell to Amery Tel. 569-S.C.	28	Recommends Twynam for Home Membership and Sloan or Mudie for Governorship of Central Provinces; favours Mudaliar for Finance Membership or, if this unacceptable, limited extension for Raisman	506
245	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2617-S	30	Intends to reduce number and length of tels.	507
		(December)		
246	Note by Monteath	2	Difficulties in Indianising Finance Membership	507
247	Miss Harrison to Amery Letter	2	Encloses letter for Gandhi pleading with him to call a truce to civil disobedience	510
248	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–8	2	Length of tels., Indore's National War Front demonstration; talk with Villiers on Indian political scene; difficulties of present Indian constitutional position	513
249	Maxwell to Wavell Letter (extract)	2	Plans for strengthening and re-organising services	516
250	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8, 10	3	Length of tels.; Home and Finance Memberships	518
252	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1293	7	Refers to No. 245; is similarly instructing India Office; but is anxious to be adequately informed of developments	525
253	Wavell to Maxwell Letter	7	Thanks for No. 249; suggests a programme of action	526
256	Minute by Monteath	8	Indianisation of Finance will lessen S. of S.'s ability to discharge responsibility to Parliament	529
259	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 6	9	Refers to Nos. 226 and 234; C. F. Andrews; Home and Finance Memberships	531
260	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	9	Finance Membership; possibility of Indianising Home Membership instead	536
261	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2696-S	10	Still favours Indian Finance Member, and failing that extension of Raisman; knows no Indian suitable for Home Membership	539
262	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2697-S	10	Refers to No. 252 and will ensure he is adequately informed	540
268	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–5, 7, 9	16	Refers to No. 238; Finance Membership; suggestion of (1) Niemeyer or (2) Bank of England official to assist Mudaliar; wider implications of Indianisation; possible post-war interim govt.; Governors' Conference; recruitment to services	548

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*December*)		
269	Minute by Monteath (extract)	17	Likely date of India's self-govt. as factor in recruitment to services	551
270	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1331	18	Refers to No. 261; informs him of Anderson's preference for Niemeyer and Montagu Norman's suggestion that one of his officials underpin Mudaliar; and asks his intentions as to supporting Mudaliar and on Supply Membership, in case Niemeyer declines	552
271	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1333	19	Refers to No. 238, para. 7; feels justified in resuming recruitment to services; discusses appointment of Europeans on short-term contracts; doubts possibility of borrowing from Home Civil Service; and seeks further details of required European intake	553
272	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1334	19	Refers to No. 271 and asks his opinion on whether recruitment of Europeans to services should be resumed	555
274	Clow to Wavell Report 77, para. 4	19	Japanese political warfare	557
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 8, 16–17	22	Refers to Nos. 242 and 248; political outlook; extension of jurisdiction of Federal Court; Council meeting; recruitment to services	562
280	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4, 6–7	23	Executive Council system in Section 93 Provinces; discussion with Advisers on recruitment to Services; Viceroy's Calcutta speech; Wavell's *Allenby in Egypt*	569
281	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2831–S	24	Replies to questions in No. 270	571
282	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2832–S	24	Strongly reiterates view that Indian should be appointed Finance member and his confidence in Mudaliar	572
286	Amery to Anderson Letter	28	Sends copies of Nos. 281 and 282; arrangements for Cabinet discussion	576
288	Minute by Monteath (extract)	30	Comment on No. 289	578
289	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 590	30	Memorandum by Amery on The Indian Finance Membership	579
290	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–6	30	Memorandum on Finance membership (No. 289); Home Membership; Joyce's impressions of India; timing of Cripps Offer	582
291	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 183–G.C.P., para. 6	undated	Part Muslim League might play in solving political deadlock	585
		1944 (*January*)		
298	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–4, 6, 11–12	5–6	Refers to Nos. 260, 268 and 280; Raisman's future; difficulties of Indianising Home Membership; attitude of G. of I. to	592

Name and number	*Date* (*January*)	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
298 (*cont.*)		H.M.G.'s inquisitions; recruitment to services; general expectation of a political pronouncement	
303 Churchill to Attlee Tel. Frozen 1125 via Air Ministry	6	Refers to No. 289 and hopes Raisman's term as Finance Member will be extended	605
304 War Cabinet W.M. (44) 2nd Conclusions Minute 2	6	Appointment, or re-appointment, of Finance Member	605
305 Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–7	6–7	Idea of establishing training school in India for boys wishing to join services; Muslim League attitude to proposed extension of jurisdiction of Federal Court; proposal that Judicial Committee of Privy Council should sit in Dominions; Cabinet discussion of Finance Membership	608
307 Amery to Wavell Tel. 33	7	Informs him of Cabinet decision on Finance Membership as in No. 304	611
310 Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–7	8	Mountbatten and move of S.E.A.C. to Ceylon; Home and Finance Memberships; no prospect of political progress at present; practice of Viceroy, Governors and P.S.V. retaining records on leaving office	613
324 Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3, 5	12	Finance and Home Memberships; proposed Reconstruction Member	636
325 Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4, 6–7, 11–12	12–13	Possibility of fresh officers for Indian Army; talk with French on post-war establishment of R.I.N.; future of Minister of State Staff; Finance Membership; proposed British Council delegation to India	641
330 Wavell to Amery Tel. 114-S	14	Is sorry for decision reported in No. 307; presumes he will be officially informed	647
331 Amery to Wavell Tel. 1327	17	Informs him officially of reasons for Cabinet decision in No. 304	647
333 Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–6, 9, 12	18	Refers to No. 290; suggestion of Gordon as Finance Member; unable to spare Hallett for Home Membership; doubts value of academic attempts at constitution-making; timing of Cripps offer; meeting of National Defence Council; Viceroy's address to Legislature	648
334 Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 3, 5–7	19	Churchill's return; suggestion of Gordon as Finance Member; suggestion of roving Indian delegation to study foreign constitutions; suggestion of constitutional enquiry established by Provincial Premiers, States representatives and Moderates; development of poetry societies in India	654
340 Gandhi to Secretary, Govt. of Bombay (Home Dept.) Letter	24	Makes representation against order for his detention and asks for independent tribunal to investigate charges against Congress and himself.	665

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(January)		
	Annexes to No. 340		Letters from Bombay (Home Dept.) to Gandhi informing him of (1) his right to protest against detention order (2) decision not to cancel order	666
344	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	25	Refers to No. 305; specialised education for civil servants; Jinnah	669
346	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–5	27	Churchill's proposal to reduce size of Indian Army; Finance Membership	675
349	Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 31	31	Mrs Gandhi's critical condition	686
		(February)		
351	G. of I., Home Dept. to Secretary, Political Dept., India Office Express Letter, 29/1/44–Poll. (I)	1	Mrs Naidu's statements to press and action taken by G. of I.	688
352	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–4, 6–7, 11	1	Refers to No. 325; possibility of fresh officers for Indian Army; future of R.I.N.; Rowlands; possible visit by British Council delegation	690
355	Amery to Wavell Tel. 3–U	5	Butler has taken temporary charge of India Office	696
360	Wavell to Amery Tel. 260–S	8	Enquires position on Finance Membership; commends Raisman's presentation of Budget to Council	703
369	Amery to Anderson Letter	10	Recommends extension of Raisman's term as Finance Member; does not favour forcing Gordon on Wavell	711
370	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 7–8	10	Finance Membership; assessment of Indian Moderates and chances of constitutional negotiations; suggested visit by British Council delegation	711
371	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3, 7	10–11	Finance Membership; manning of Imperial Airways flights across India	717
378	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 19th Conclusions	14	Agreement to examine proposal for re-employment of retired members of Indian services	727
381	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–4, 6–7, 9, 14	15	Raisman's anxiety on Finance Membership; Alexander's suggestion of reconciliation with Gandhi; calibre of Council Members; Roy's request for subsidy and seats on Council; leaks to Press by Council Members; book on 'Quit Britain' movement	730
387	Gandhi to Wavell Letter	17	Repeats denial of Congress responsibility for disturbances; urges immediate satisfaction of India's demand for freedom	738
390	Minutes by Amery and Churchill P. 5/44	18–20	Raisman's extension as Finance Member	742
392	G. of I., Home Dept. to S. of S. Express Letter	19	Main conclusions of Wickenden's *Report on the Disturbances 1942–43* and decision as to action thereon	745

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*February*)		
394	Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept. to S. of S. Tel. (unnumbered)	22	Mrs Gandhi's death	751
399	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	24–5	Viceroy's Address to Legislature; value of poetry; Raisman's extension	755
400	Wavell to Gandhi Letter	25	Thanks for No. 387; refers him to his Address to Legislature	757
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 6–7, 9–10	25	Refers to No. 371; press reactions to Viceroy's Address to Legislature; Raisman's extension; manning of Imperial Airways flights across India by Indian crews; Viceroy's interviews with Rajagopalachari, Subbarayan and Aney; Viceroy's letter to Gandhi (No. 400)	757
403	Gandhi to Secretary, G. of I., Home Dept. Letter	26	Hopes Government will publish No. 296 in Vol. III with Enclosures	763
404	Note by Intelligence Bureau, G. of I., Home Dept. (extract)	28	Congress and 'Big Business'	765
		(*March*)		
411	Note by Wavell	6	Interview with Birla on industrial and agricultural development and politics	779
414	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–5, 10	7	Council appointments; reactions to Budget and proposed increase of railway fares; practice of Viceroy and Governors retaining records on leaving office	784
417	Gandhi to Wavell Letter	9	Refers to No. 400; reactions to Viceroy's Address to Legislature; plea on behalf of detainees	789
418	Hallett to Wavell Report U.P. 220, paras. 7–11	9	Need to create a party to fight destructive critics; Radha Kant Malaviya's request for interview with Gandhi; need for landlords to act as leaders of rural population; suggestion Viceroy should send for Jinnah	795
419	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 7–8	9	Work of Griffiths in U.K.; Wavell's anthology	797
425	G. of I., Home Dept. to Gandhi Letter, II/4/44-M.S.	11	Refers to No. 403 and declines to publish correspondence	804
428	Mudie to Wavell Letter 207-G.B., para. 3	13	Effect of Arakan success	806
429	Colville to Wavell Letter 14	13	Future arrangements for Gandhi and likely consequences of Congress Ministry in Bombay	807
430	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 8–9	14	Proposed increase in railway fares; proposed Planning and Development Member; Gandhi's latest letters to Home Dept.; Radha Kant Malaviya's request to visit Gandhi	808
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	16	Question of commending Council Members	813

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*March*)		
437	Lewis to Wavell Report 6, para. 9	23	Jinnah's unhelpfulness	827
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 12–14	23	Current operations on Eastern Frontier; Gandhi's letter of 16 Mar. (No. 417); Govt. difficulties in Assembly; Wavell's political appreciation	828
439	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3, 7–9, 11	24	Recommended reading on 'Quit Britain' movement; bomb in Eaton Square; proposed Development Member; British pictures in Calcutta	833
443	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 8–G.C.P., para. 4	26	Conversation with Nazimuddin on Pakistan	839
445	Wavell to Gandhi Letter	28	Refers to No. 417; explains his views on future development of India and reasons for Gandhi's detention	841
446	S. of S. to G. of I., Home Dept. Tel. 7453	29	Agrees with conclusions in No. 392; records appreciation of thoroughness and balance of Wickenden Report	843
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 9, 13–15	29	Operations on Eastern Frontier; proposed Planning and Development Member; rejection of Finance Bill by Assembly; Wavell's reply to Gandhi (No. 445)	844
448	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 6	29	Talk with Robertson and Gillan; proposed Reconstruction Member	850
450	Wavell to Amery Letter F.–41 (6)–G/41	30	Refers to No. 272; post-war recruitment of Europeans and Indians to I.C.S. and I.P.; encloses tel. summarising conclusions	853
		(*April*)		
451	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 5, 11	5	Refers to No. 438; changing basis of G. of I.'s food approaches to H.M.G.; dropping of proposed increase in railway fares; general war situation	857
454	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 5, 7–8, 12, 16	8	Operations on Eastern Frontier; Council discussion on proposed increase in railway fares; Planning Member; Council's farewell to Maxwell; information on 'Quit Britain'	865
455	Gandhi to Wavell Letter	9	Replies to points raised in No. 445	871
456	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 9–G.C.P., para. 1	9	Concern over co-operation between Congress and Muslim League in defeating Finance Bill	873
458	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	13	Eden's future	875
459	Mudie to Jenkins Letter 285–G.B.	14	Encloses note of conversation with Khaliquzzaman	878
462	Wavell to Amery Letter	16	Encloses and comments upon Appreciation of the Indian Political Situation, February 1944 by Twynam, with short appreciation of his own. (Enclosure to No. 507)	883

CHAPTER 3

The New Viceroyalty—Gandhi's release; subsequent consideration of policy: 18 April to 31 August 1944

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*April*)		
463	G. of I., Home Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 4472	18	Proposal to transfer Gandhi to Ahmednagar; possible release of less important members of Working Committee	893
464	Jenkins to Mudie Letter F. 133–GG/43	18	Comment on No. 459	894
465	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 9, 13	18	Roy's letter to M.P.s; Gandhi's letter of 9 April (No. 455); meeting of National Defence Council	895
468	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 6	20	Possibility of elections during war; difficulties with U.K. press	904
469	Glancy to Wavell Letter 502	21	Azizul Haque	906
473	Amery to Wavell Tel. 9359	22	Suggestions for strengthening arguments in No. 463	913
478	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 11	26	Proposed transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar	925
479	G. of I., Home Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 4905	27	Revision of No. 463	928
481	Memorandum Supporting Resolution of Non-Party Conference held at Lucknow, April 1944	undated	Plea for Ministerial government in Section 93 Provinces; encloses resolutions passed at Lucknow Conference	929
482	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	27	Home Dept.'s reply on death of Mrs Gandhi	933
483	Wavell to Amery Tel. 886–S	28	Gandhi's condition gives cause for anxiety	936
487	Amery to Wavell Tel. 9888	29	Refers to No. 483; would prefer not to bring proposal in No. 479 before Cabinet if Gandhi cannot be moved at present	939
		(*May*)		
490	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4, 7, 9	1	Gandhi's health and proposal to transfer him to Ahmednagar; survey on long-term policy towards services; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage	940
491	Amery to Wavell Tel. 399	2	Refers to No. 462; asks if there is objection to circulation of Wavell's own appreciation to Cabinet; agrees to Gandhi's removal from Poona but questions transfer to Ahmednagar	943
492	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 236	2	Memorandum by Amery on Detention of Gandhi	944
494	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–6	3	Wavell's memorandum on political situation; suggestion of informal conference on constitutional future; proposed transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar	947

	Name and number	*Date (May)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
495	Wavell to Amery Tel. 938–S	4	Summarises Governors' reactions to proposal to release Gandhi; in light of medical opinion is instructing Govt. of Bombay to release him on 6 May	948
496	Wavell to Amery Tel. 121–S.C.	4	Reiterates arguments of No. 495	949
497	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 18/44	4	Hopes he will approve of Gandhi's release without waiting for Cabinet meeting	950
498	Churchill to Amery and Bridges Minute	4	Agrees to request in No. 497 subject to concurrence of other members of War Cabinet	951
499	Amery to Wavell Tel. 10244	4	Refers to No. 495; informs him of Cabinet's agreement to Gandhi's release and asks for details of announcement to be issued in India	951
500	Amery to Wavell Tel. 409	4	Refers to Nos. 496 and 499 and conveys admonition of Churchill's that there should be no negotiations with Gandhi	952
501	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 241	5	Memorandum by Amery on Release of Gandhi	952
502	Wavell to Amery Tel. 971–S	8	Refers to No. 491; agrees to circulation of his appreciation; explains proposed transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar was not measure of appeasement	953
504	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	9	Gandhi's release	956
505	Wavell to Amery Tel. 999–S	10	Asks him to state during next India debate that decision to release Gandhi had full support of Council	959
506	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 11–G.C.P., para. 2	10	Reactions to Gandhi's release	960
507	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 250	11	Memorandum by Amery enclosing Note by Wavell on Political Situation in India April 1944	961
508	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–8	11	Suggestions for fresh initiatives following Gandhi's release; Churchill's view as to possibility of attempting settlement; suggestion of complete Indianisation of Council as interim step; Non-Party Conference's plea for Ministerial Government in Section 93 Provinces (No. 481)	964
509	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1010–S	12	Asks him to obtain Royal Approval for Dalal's appointment as Planning and Development Member; outlines Dalal's responsibilities	967
510	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2, 6, 16–17, 19	16	Refers to No. 494; Gandhi's condition and general reactions to his release; Dalal's appointment; proposed extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court; additional leave for services; crime statistics	968

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*May*)		
511	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	18	British Council of Churches' delegation	974
512	Colville to Wavell Report 22 (extract)	19	Reactions to Gandhi's release in Bombay	977
515	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–5, 13	23	Gandhi's activities and Congress–Muslim League relations; printing of Gandhi correspondence; post-war planning; proposed extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court	982
519	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 5, 7–8	25	Dalal's appointment; Amery's line in likely Commons' debate; role of Indian troops in Italian campaign; need for book of general interest on Indian Army	988
520	Wavell to Sapru Letter F. 125/25/G.G./43	28	Comments on No. 481; its Enclosure and letter accompanying it	990
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6, 11	30	Alleged circumstances of Gandhi's release; Non-Party Conference's Memorandum (No. 481) and Wavell's reply (No. 520)	991
522	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 287	31	Memorandum by Amery on Recruitment for the I.C.S. and I.P.	995
		(*June*)		
523	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	2	Gandhi	996
527	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 5–6, 11, 14–15, 18	6	Dalal's appointment; Gandhi; operation of India Press censorship; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage; refugee problem; custody of Viceroys' and Governors' private correspondence; policy towards members of the I.C.S. suspected of associations with Congress	1002
529	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1194–S	8	Does not anticipate need to detain Gandhi again at present but would place him in Ahmednahar if there were occasion to detain him	1009
531	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 9	8	Normandy invasion	1012
532	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 74th Conclusions Minute 1	9	Recruitment for the I.C.S. and I.P.	1014
534	Amery to Wavell Tel. 525	11	Proposal in No. 529 requires Cabinet approval but presumes he does not wish approach made to Cabinet at present	1019
535	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	12	Refers to No. 523; policy on publication of Gandhi's correspondence	1019
537	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–7, 10, 14–17	13–15	Main conclusions of Moon's *Strangers in India*; desiderata of future constitutional policy; Cabinet consideration of recruitment for I.C.S. and I.P. (No. 532); crime statistics; Indian Press censorship; Sorensen's P.Q. on organisations subsidised by G. of I.; policy towards	1024

	Name and number	*Date (June)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
537 (*cont.*)			members of the I.C.S. suspected of associations with Congress; Noon's scheme for 'United States of India'	
538	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 326 (Proof)	17	Note by Churchill circulating letter of 20 May from Casey	1028
539	Gandhi to Wavell Letter	17	Seeks permission to see Congress Working Committee and to publish his correspondence with Government; offers to meet Wavell	1032
541	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 7, 9	20	Viceroy's visit to Eastern front; Gandhi's letter (No. 539) and publication of correspondence with him; alleged circumstances of his release; Sapru	1033
542	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	21	Interview with Indian Federation of Labour deputation	1037
544	Wavell to Gandhi Letter	22	Rejects his requests in No. 539 for meetings with Viceroy and Congress Working Committee; G. of I. is publishing all of Gandhi's political correspondence during detention	1039
546	Sapru to Wavell Letter	23	Refers to No. 520; elaborates arguments for Ministerial government in Section 93 Provinces and formation of 'National Government' at centre	1041
550	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6, 8–9	26–9	Arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage; unsuitability of British Constitution in Indian circumstances; Wavell's reply (No. 544) to Gandhi's letter (No. 539)	1047
552	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3–5, 9–11	27	Refers to No. 537; Moon's *Strangers in India*; Noon's scheme for 'United States of India'; publication of Gandhi's correspondence; Gandhi's health; recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P.; publicity in India for British Army's action in France and Italy; successor to Raisman; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage	1050
557	Thorne to Monteath Tel. 8589	29	Proposes to place Gandhi in Ahmednagar if it were necessary to re-arrest him	1057
558	Amery to Wavell Tel. 573	29	Refers to No. 545; would prefer Bengal Administrative Enquiry to be part of all-India Enquiry	1057
559	Hallett to Wavell Letter U.P. 235, para. 2	29	Gandhi's latest letter to Wavell (No. 539)	1058
		(*July*)		
562	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1330–S	2	Refers to No. 558; but argues there is no case for all-India administrative Enquiry of type proposed in Bengal	1060
563	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 371	3	Memorandum by Amery on Gandhi; Place of Detention if Re-arrested	1061
565	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3, 5	4	Critique of Moon's *Strangers in India*; publication of Gandhi's correspondence;	1063

	Name and number	*Date (July)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
565	(*cont.*)		opposition to all-India Administrative Enquiry	
567	Churchill to Wavell Tel. 584 via India Office	5	Asks how Gandhi's 'most remarkable recovery' squares with medical reports before his release	1070
568	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	6	Successor to Raisman	1070
569	Wavell to Sapru Letter F. 125 (25)–GG/43	6–7	Difficulties in implementing proposals in No. 546	1072
570	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 1366–S via India Office	8	Refers to No. 567; does not consider Gandhi has resumed politics actively; believes his release was right and justified	1073
571	Sapru to Wavell Letter	10	Finds No. 569 extremely disappointing	1074
573	Amery to Wavell Tel. 15433	11	Asks for his views, and any known facts, on Rajagopalachari's statement that Gandhi had made, or agreed to, proposals for settlement with Muslim League	1075
574	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3, 9, 11–12, 14	11	Refers to No. 550; Drew Pearson's allegation that G. of I. withheld letter from Roosevelt to Gandhi; Rajagopalachari's 'formula' for Congress–Muslim League settlement; Viceroy's correspondence with Sapru; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage; Sultan Ahmed's suggestion of 'goodwill' publicity to improve Hindu–Muslim relations; financial position of govt. servants; Amery's interview with delegation from Indian Federation of Labour	1076
575	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 90th Conclusions Minute 4	12	Gandhi: Place of Detention if Rearrested	1082
576	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1389–S	12	Answers No. 573; believes that while he cannot usefully intervene at present, they should avoid pouring cold water on negotiations	1083
577	Jenkins to Turnbull Tel. 1394–S	13	Refers to No. 576; informs him of Gandhi's two statements to Press	1086
578	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2, 6–7	13	P.Q.s on Gandhi–Jinnah negotiations; Cabinet discussion on Gandhi's place of detention if re-arrested (No. 575); possibility of publishing Noon's pamphlet on political situation; Wavell's despatch on operations Jan.–June 1943	1087
579	Rutherford to Wavell Letter 568–G.B., para. 3	13	Attitude of Press and public to Gandhi	1089
580	Amery to Wavell Tel. 605	14	Refers to No. 562; explains his anxieties on overlap between proposed Bengal Administrative Enquiry and other Enquiries; prefers all-India Enquiry	1090

	Name and number	*Date (July)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
580 (*cont.*)			proceeding Province by Province; and suggests possible Chairman for latter Enquiry	
581	Wavell to Amery Tel. 164-S.C.	15	Refers to Nos. 576 and 577; discusses main heads of Gandhi's proposals, Gandhi's intentions and attitude govt. should adopt	1093
582	Amery to Wavell Tel. 15722	15	Thanks for No. 576; seeks his views on approach he should adopt in Commons' debate if questioned on Gandhi's recent moves; asks whether he should indicate essential conditions for acceptability of Congress-Muslim League settlement	1095
584	Gandhi to Wavell Letter	15	Is sorry publicity was given to statement primarily intended for Wavell; hopes that at least one of the requests in No. 539 can now be granted	1096
586	Wavell to Amery Tel. 167-S.C.	18	Refers to No. 582; considers detailed restatement of H.M.G.'s position undesirable; and indicates necessary preliminaries before meeting between Gandhi and Congress leaders	1097
587	Wavell to Amery Tel. 168-S.C.	18	Refers to No. 582; feels meeting between Gandhi and Congress leaders is undesirable at present; wonders whether Churchill could be induced to make positive statement on Indian self-govt.	1099
588	Colville to Wavell Report 26, para. 3	18	Reactions in Bombay to Gandhi's proposals and a personal assessment	1099
590	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 396	18	Memorandum by Amery on Gandhi's Recent Moves	1101
591	Amery to Wavell Tel. 621	19	Refers to No. 587; likely approach of his speech in Commons' debate; no prospect of Churchill making statement on Indian self-govt. at present	1103
592	S. of S. to G. of I., Home Dept. Tel. 16038	19	Refers to No. 557; H.M.G. concurs in Gandhi's detention in Ahmednagar should occasion arise	1104
593	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2-3, 8, 10	19	Background to Gandhi's recent moves, Gandhi's possible motives and reactions to the proposals; Sapru's further letter (No. 571); difficulties of full scale Enquiry into services; Raisman's successor	1105
594	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 8	20	Gandhi's proposals; war situation	1110
595	Hallett to Wavell Letter U.P. 236, paras. 3-6	20	Assessment of Gandhi's proposals; Viceroy's correspondence with Sapru	1112
596	Wavell to Amery Tel. 175-S.C.	21	Refers to No. 591; feels it safer not to say Gandhi-Jinnah negotiations have ended; is sorry Churchill will not make statement	1114

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*July*)		
597	Wavell to Gandhi Letter	22	Thanks for No. 584; will consider any definite and constructive policy submitted to him	1115
598	Wavell to Amery Tel. 188–S.C.	24	Refers to No. 580; is suggesting Casey postpones Bengal Administrative Enquiry until Famine Enquiry has examined Bengal; explains difficulties of overall investigation into services	1115
599	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 22–G.C.P., para. 5	25–6	Reactions to Gandhi's proposals in C.P.; attitude towards suggested release of all security prisoners; Enclosure: extract from C.P. Intelligence Report dated 21 July 1944	1116
600	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1450–S	26	Council's suggestions on Amery's approach in Commons' debate and its attitude towards Gandhi's proposals	1118
604	Savarkar to Amery Tel. (unnumbered)	26	Protests against Gandhi's 'vivisection' proposals	1123
605	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1454–S	27	Informs him of Gandhi's, Rajagopalachari's and *Hindustan Times*' reaction to Lords debate	1123
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 5, 8, 11	27	Refers to No. 578; Gandhi's letter (No. 584) and Wavell's reply (No. 597); reactions to Gandhi's proposals; Council discussion on Commons' debate; Roy's memorandum on political situation; speeches by Council Members; idea of direct administration over tribal areas in Burma, Assam and Bengal; Mudie, Thorne, Dalal and Hutton	1125
608	Rutherford to Wavell Letter 598–G.B., para. 3	27	Reactions to Gandhi's proposals in Bihar	1131
609	Amery to Wavell Tel. 16756	28	Refers to No. 600; prefers not to raise issue of whether Gandhi's request to meet Viceroy and Congress Working Committee is matter for Governor-General in Council; feels it is undesirable for Council to propound its own constitutional solution	1132
		(*August*)		
613	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1491–S	1	Refers to Nos. 614 and 615; explains nature of his reply to Gandhi	1135
614	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1492–S	1	Text of letter of 27 July from Gandhi to Wavell referring to No. 597 and indicating conditions on which Gandhi would advise Congress Working Committee to co-operate fully in war effort	1136
615	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1493–S	1	Text of proposed reply to letter in No. 614 stating that Gandhi's proposal is unacceptable to H.M.G. as basis for discussion but outlining Viceroy's ideas on formation of transitional govt.	1136

	Name and number	*Date (August)*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
616	Wavell to Amery Letter F. 50 (12)-GG/43	1	Agrees generally with No. 609 but considers he would have to consult Council before seeing Gandhi or allowing him to meet Congress Working Committee	1138
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 6, 10–11, 13–14	1	Gandhi's latest letter to Wavell (No. 614); Gandhi–Jinnah meeting; operation of inward censorship and its bearing on Drew Pearson's article; meeting of National Defence Council; proposal to extend jurisdiction of Federal Court; Spens' memorandum on judicial reform; services of Nagas in Assam	1139
618	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–8, 12, PS.	1–3	Commons' debate on India; discussions on constitutional change by Council; suggestions for imposing a constitution for minimum term of years; idea of factual enquiry into various constitutions; reply to Gandhi's latest letter (No. 614); arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage	1143
619	Glancy to Wavell Letter 521 (extract)	2	Reactions to Gandhi's proposals in Punjab	1148
620	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 426	2	Memorandum by Amery on Viceroy's Proposed Reply to Gandhi	1149
622	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 429 (revise)	3	Report by Attlee on India Committee's consideration of Viceroy's Proposed Reply to Gandhi	1152
623	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 100th Conclusions Minute 3	3	Decision to remit No. 622 to India Committee for revision	1154
624	Churchill to Wavell Tel. 17170 via India Office	4	Refers to No. 613; explains delay in Cabinet decision on reply to Gandhi	1158
625	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1503–S	4	Anticipates likely outcome of Gandhi–Jinnah meeting and explains No. 615 was intended to indicate Gandhi's plan had no chance of acceptance	1159
626	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 1504–S via India Office	4	Refers to No. 624; explains draft in No. 615 merely informs Gandhi of position repeatedly stated by H.M.G.; has acted throughout viceroyalty within terms of Enclosure to No. 172	1159
627	Dow to Wavell Letter 236/FR (extract)	4	Hidayatullah's assessment of Jinnah's actions	1160
628	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 430	4	Note by Bridges circulating India Committee's revised draft reply to Gandhi	1161
629	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 102nd Conclusions Minute 1	4	Agreement to text of reply to Gandhi in Enclosure to No. 628 subject to certain amendments	1162
630	Amery to Wavell Tel. 656	4	Explains reasons for Cabinet's amendments to draft reply to Gandhi	1165
631	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17257	5	Refers to No. 613; Cabinet considers immediate publication of reply to Gandhi and previous correspondence very important	1166

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
632	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17258	5	Refers to No. 631; text of draft reply to letter in No. 614 as approved by War Cabinet	1166
633	Campbell to Eden Tel. 4259	8	Likely adverse effect in U.S. of draft in No. 632 could be mitigated by reference to H.M.G.'s adherence to Cripps offer	1168
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2, 6, 14, PS.	9–10	Cabinet consideration of reply to Gandhi; difficulties of protecting Depressed Classes; war situation; idea of direct administration over tribal areas; U.K. public's attitude to Gandhi; conversation with Tidy	1171
636	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1546–S	10	Refers to No. 630; considers draft in No. 632 will destroy hopes of ending political deadlock; explains his amendments to No. 632	1176
637	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1547–S	10	Refers to No. 636; text of draft reply to letter in No. 614 as amended by Wavell	1177
638	Note by Wavell (extract)	10	Interview with Dalal on politics and economic planning	1178
639	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4	10	Commons' debate on India; Viceroy's visit to eastern front; reply to Gandhi	1179
640	Twynam to Wavell Letter R. 24–G.C.P. (extract)	10	Rumours of Gandhi's attitude towards Rajagopalachari formula	1181
641	War Cabinet Committee on India I (44) third meeting	11	Consideration of Nos. 636, 637 and 633	1182
642	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17796	11	Refers to Nos. 636 and 637; if Wavell feels strong objection to draft in No. 632 only alternative is short reply as in No. 643; intends to suggest short reply to Cabinet	1185
643	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17797	11	Refers to No. 642; text of suggested short reply to Gandhi	1186
644	Amery to Wavell Tel. 6–U	11	Explains reasons for Nos. 642 and 643 and that Attlee and India Committee are prepared to sanction reply in No. 643 without reference to Churchill	1186
646	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1560–S	12	Refers to No. 642; still feels strong objection to draft in No. 632 and considers draft in No. 643 quite unsuitable; maintains he is entitled to reply to Gandhi in own words providing these accord with H.M.G.'s policy; and presses for Cabinet approval of draft in No. 637 on 14 Aug.	1188
647	Wavell to Amery Tel. 7–U	12	Refers to Nos. 644 and 646; unless Cabinet has objection of substance proposes to issue draft in No. 637	1189
648	Amery to Wavell Tel. 668	12	Refers to No. 646 and will do his utmost with Cabinet	1189
649	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 441	12	Note by Amery circulating Nos. 636, 637, 642 and 643	1189

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
650	Wavell to Hope Letter 40 (extract)	12	Discusses letter in No. 614 and factors to be considered in replying to it	1190
651	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1562–S	13	Thanks for No. 648; fears that discourteous or obstructive reply might result in (*a*) H.M.G. being blamed for a failure of Gandhi–Jinnah talks or (b) Gandhi and Jinnah entering a temporary alliance against H.M.G.	1190
652	Churchill to Bridges Tel. Chain 28 Guard via Allied Forces Headquarters, Italy and Air Ministry	13	Hopes Cabinet will approve draft in No. 643; criticises Wavell's attitude	1191
653	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 105th Conclusions	14	Decision to ask Wavell to send Gandhi either draft in No. 632 with certain amendments or draft in No. 643	1192
654	Amery to Wavell Tel. 7–U	14	Asks him to take no action on Nos. 655 and 656 until he has seen No. 657	1194
655	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17968	14	Refers to No. 646 and informs him of Cabinet decision as in No. 653	1195
656	Amery to Wavell Tel. 17969	14	Refers to No. 655 and explains reasons why Cabinet preferred draft in No. 632	1195
657	Amery to Wavell Tel. 8–U	14	Hopes he will accept Cabinet decision and not take action proposed in No. 647	1196
658	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1568–S	15	Refers to Nos. 655 and 656; is issuing draft in No. 632 with modifications in No. 655	1197
659	Wavell to Gandhi Letter	15	Reply to letter in No. 614 as sent	1197
660	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 5, 18	15–16	Approach of Gandhi–Jinnah talks; letter on India by members of R.A.F. published in *Daily Worker*; Jogendra Singh's draft letter to Gandhi; Cabinet decision on reply to Gandhi (No. 653) and Cabinet's attitude to Wavell; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage	1199
662	Laithwaite to Amery Letter	16	Attlee considers Amery's ground of dissent from No. 653 to be inadmissible	1204
663	Amery to Attlee Letter	16	Disputes Attlee's argument in No. 662 but slightly amends his ground of dissent	1205
664	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–5	16	Wavell's decision to send Cabinet's longer draft to Gandhi; attitude of Amery, Wavell, Churchill and War Cabinet to H.M.G.'s pledges; fears of consequences of reply to Gandhi; current Indian political scene; Beverley Nichols' *Verdict on India*	1205
665	Minute by Casey	17	Future constitutional policy	1208
666	Colville to Wavell Report 28, para. 2	18	Prospects for Gandhi–Jinnah meeting; Viceroy's reply to Gandhi (No. 659)	1209
667	Attlee to Amery Letter	18	Thanks for No. 663; agrees to his amended ground of dissent from No. 653	1210

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
669	G. of I., Home Dept. to all Provincial Governments and Chief Commissioners (except Panth Piploda) Express Letter	21	Recommends continuation of policy towards Communist Party outlined in No. 127	1212
670	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 8, 11–15, 17–20	23	Refers to Nos. 618 and 635; reactions to, and possible results of, reply to Gandhi (No. 659); attitude if pressed for Nehru's release; conditions of permanent British settlers in India; arrangements for *Haj* pilgrimage; V. P. Menon's note; idea of factual enquiry into various constitutions; Labour Dept.'s comments on Roy's memorandum; note on Lady Hartog's *India in Outline*; Noon's idea of visits to India; Governors' Conference; proposed war allowances for services; Spens' memorandum on judicial reform; Enclosure: Note by V. P. Menon dated 17 August 1944 commenting on No. 618, paras. 5–6	1213
671	Glancy to Wavell Letter 522–F.L. (extract)	23	Assessment of Gandhi's intentions in agreeing to talks with Jinnah	1223
672	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–4, 10–11	23–4	Refers to No. 617; European war situation; future Burma operations; Indian troops in Europe and Middle East after end of European war; operation of Indian censorship	1224
673	Hope to Wavell Letter 8/1944, paras. 2–4	27	Reactions in Madras to Wavell's correspondence with Gandhi and postponement of Gandhi–Jinnah meeting	1228
674	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2	28	Refers to No. 664; reactions to his reply to Gandhi; Beverley Nichols' *Verdict on India*	1228
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 8–9	31	Crime statistics; Gandhi–Jinnah meeting; observances in event of Gandhi's death	1232

CHAPTER 4

The Bengal Famine and India's demand for food imports

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June 1943*)		
5	Linlithgow to Herbert Letter, para. 2	16	Centre's efforts on food question	8
12	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter, para. 2	19	Food situation and results of 'Food Drive'	13
13	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 8	19	Comment on Free Trade solution to food crisis	14
		(*July*)		
27	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter	2	Food situation in Bengal; plea for Central Government control of food grains	42

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*July*)		
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 8	5	Third All-India Food Conference	51
33	Linlithgow to Herbert Letter	11	Thanks for No. 27; Delhi Food Conference; congratulations on 'Food Drive'	59
38	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 5718	15	Reports deficit of 1·29m tons on future food requirements and requests import of 500,000 tons from September 1943	75
39	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1497–S	15	Supports, with Auchinleck, request in No. 38; stresses urgency of food situation; and seeks permission to state in Central Legislature H.M.G.'s intention to place sufficient shipping at India's disposal	78
40	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1498–S	15	Refers to No. 39 and adds that transport system would be greatly eased by imports through various ports	79
44	Hope to Linlithgow Letter 4/1943, paras. 6–10	15	Food situation in Madras	81
56	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–3	21	Food situation in Bengal; difficulties from beggars	112
59	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 16683	26	Cannot offer much hope for early success of request in No. 39; asks about timing and tonnage of possible shipments	115
65	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1601–S	29	Answers questions in No. 59	133
66	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 345	30	Report by the Shipping Committee on India's Requirements of Imported Food Grains	133
67	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 349	31	Memorandum by Amery on India's Requirements of Imported Food Grains	139
		(*August*)		
69	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1637–S	3	Transfer of Food portfolio from Azizul Haque to Srivastava	147
70	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 16, 20	10	Braund's report on food administration in Bengal; division of Commerce and Food portfolio	147
71	War Cabinet W.M. 43 111th Conclusions Minute 1	4	Decision to move maximum of 50,000 tons wheat to Colombo for possible forwarding to India and to make available, if feasible, 100,000 tons Iraq barley	155
72	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 2	5	Cabinet discussion on food situation	158
74	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 17601	7	Reports Cabinet decision as in No. 71	163
78	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1742–S	13	Refers to No. 74 and warns that, unless decision reported therein is modified, G. of I. cannot be responsible for India's stability or her capacity to serve as a base for operations	169
79	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1743–S	13	Refers to No. 78 and is prepared to supply further ammunition or strengthen appeal if necessary	170

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
83	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 877	17	Has circulated No. 78 to Cabinet and telegraphed text to Churchill at Quebec	175
85	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 1	17	No. 78 forwarded to Churchill	177
86	Linlithgow to Glancy Letter	17	States anxieties on Punjab food administration and stresses importance placed on adequate wheat exports from Punjab	178
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 11	21	Thanks for Amery's help on food question	180
90	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter	28	Measures taken to improve food administration; responsibilities for situation	187
93	Memorandum by G. of I., Food Dept.	undated	Defects in food administration in Bengal and proposals for their remedy	196
		(*September*)		
95	Christie to Abell Letter 60/S	2	Describes contributions of Govt. of India and Govt. of Bengal towards improvement of Bengal food situation	205
98	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 944	4	Refers to No. 83; reports conversation with Leathers but considers any increase in tonnage unlikely; will do utmost to ensure full implementation of arrangements reported in No. 74	210
100	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2	6	Refers to No. 85; Cabinet decision on food imports; Bengal food administration	211
102	Auchinleck to Brooke Tel. 70197/C	8	Pleads for increased tonnage for food imports	217
103	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 8	8	Conversation with Leathers on shipping position	218
105	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 20660	10	Requests material on food situation	224
106	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 393	10	Memorandum by Amery enclosing extracts from Intelligence Summary on Food situation in India	225
118	Glancy to Linlithgow Letter 469	16	Punjab deputation to Delhi food discussions	269
119	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 407	17	Memorandum by C.O.S. on Economic Situation in India with Annex of extracts from Intelligence Summary on food situation	270
121	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2069–S	18	Appreciation of food situation in answer to No. 105	278
122	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 21552	19	Refers to No. 121 and asks for indication of food situation in other Provinces and major States	282
123	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2088–S	20	Report of Long-term Food Policy Committee urges need for imports; clamour from Press and public opinion expected	282
125	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2090–S	20	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on food and political situation in Bengal	284

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(September)		
129	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 6, 22–4	20–1	Punjab Ministry's attitude to foodgrain procurement and difficulties of central action; Council's pressure for food imports	295
130	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2106–S	21	Answers questions in No. 122	302
132	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 411	22	Memorandum by Amery on Economic Situation in India	303
137	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–2	23	Amery's Commons' statement on food situation and Cabinet memoranda on situation (Nos. 119 and 132)	313
138	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 372–S.C.	24	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on food and relief situation in Bengal	315
139	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 131st Conclusions Minute 1	24	Decision to aim at shipping 200,000 tons of foodgrains to India by end of 1943 and to review position then	317
141	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 22051	25	Refers to No. 78 and conveys Cabinet decision as in No. 139	321
142	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 1031	25	Refers to No. 141; explains background to Cabinet decision in No. 139 and asks to be consulted before public announcement is made	321
144	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 392–S.C.	26	Asks him to press Indian requests for food imports and reports Council's unease on subject	323
146	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 5, PS.	27	Food situation; talk with Glancy on Punjab procurements	324
147	Linlithgow to Glancy Letter, paras. 1–3	27	Concern over Punjab attitude on food question; importance of holding food prices down	326
148	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 407–S.C.	28	Refers to No. 142; must continue pressing case for imports; and reports (1) Raisman's agreement to finance purchase of Iraq barley (2) efforts to secure Punjab co-operation	327
149	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 420–S.C.	29	Reports conversation with Khizar and further conversation with Glancy on Punjab procurements	328
151	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 430–S.C.	29–30	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on situation in Bengal	330
		(October)		
156	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 6–7, 11, 19	1–4	Refers to No. 137; Punjab attitude on food question; Ministerial responsibilities for food situation; helpfulness of C.O.S.; scheme for requisitioning Punjab wheat; review of food situation on departure	344
157	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–3	1	Cabinet decision on food shipments (No. 139); price of Iraq barley	353
158	Rutherford to Linlithgow Letter	2	Background to Bengal situation and recommendations for its remedy	357

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*October*)		
162	G. of I., [? Food] Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 8442	6	Explains why amount and composition of food imports cannot be announced and urges importation of 500,000 tons at earliest moment	373
166	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 22964	7	Asks help in preparing Commons statement on food situation	380
169	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 531–S.C.	8	Reports measures taken to increase supply of foodgrains from Punjab but stresses importance of further imports	384
174	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2169–S	10	Repeats tel. from Rutherford, referring to No. 158 on food situation	390
175	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2173–S	10	Refers to No. 166 and supplies appreciation of Bengal food situation	390
180	Rutherford to Amery Letter	18	Mortality rate and food situation in Bengal	397
182	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 43/43	21	Seeks agreement to publication of White Paper on Food situation	400
183	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	21	Cabinet's attitude to food shipments	401
185	S. of S. to G. of I., Food Dept. Tel. 24237	22	Refers to No. 162; is prepared to ask Cabinet next month to agree to import of 100,000 tons food grains during Jan. and Feb. 1944; and asks for report and arguments to support this proposal	405
187	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3, 5	25	Bengal medical situation; Bengal Ordinance to control destitutes; opening of Distress Relief Fund	407
191	Dibdin to Turnbull Note	28	Comments on No. 180	412
193	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2396–S	29	Sends appreciation of Bengal situation; asks him to stress its seriousness and press Cabinet for maximum imports	413
		(*November*)		
197	Memorandum by Wavell	1	The Food Situation	417
199	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–5, 8, 13	1–2	Viceroy's visit to Bengal; his inspection of conditions in Calcutta and Contai; measures instituted to improve situation; general food situation and attitude to food policies of Punjab Ministry; Enclosures: (1) Viceroy's visit to Contai (2) Statement to Bengal Ministry (3) Announcement issued at Calcutta (4) Tel. from Wavell to Auchinleck on use of army in Bengal	430
200	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2414–S	2	Measures being taken by army to assist Govt. of Bengal	443
203	G.–G. (Food Dept.) to S. of S. Tel. 2415–S	3	Refers to No. 185; in view of still unsatisfactory food situation stresses need for imports	445
205	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	3	U.K. reactions to Bengal famine; Canadian grain offer	446

	Name and number	*Date* (*November*)	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
207	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 504	4	Memorandum by Amery on Shipment of Foodgrains to India	449
208	Rutherford to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–6	4	Food situation in Bengal	451
209	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	6	Commons debate on food situation; request for further shipments of foodgrains; Canadian wheat offer	451
213	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–7	8	Commons debate on food situation; army relief and medical situation in Bengal; general food situation	455
214	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2463–S	9	Reports Assembly motions for investigation into food situation and Council's decision to oppose immediate enquiry while accepting idea in principle	461
215	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2464–S	9	Refers to No. 214; explains background to Council's decision; would not have overruled Council had resolution been moved	463
216	Amery to Wavell Tel. 25701	9	Refers to No. 217; suggests Viceroy acknowledges and that advisability of enquiry should be considered	463
217	Amery to Wavell Tel. 25702	9	Repeats tel. from Mayor of Calcutta to King asking for establishment of Royal Commission on causes of famine	464
219	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 152nd Conclusions Minute 2	10	Decision to arrange shipment of 100,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India in Jan.–Feb. 1944 and to deprecate proposed Canadian shipment	465
221	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2473–S	11	Refers to No. 216 and reports demand for enquiry will be renewed and Council's decision to adhere to line in No. 214	467
222	Amery to Wavell Tel. 25879	11	Refers to No. 214; agrees that immediate enquiry with wide terms must be refused; and hopes any definite commitment to proposal can be avoided	468
226	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	12	Cabinet discussion on food shipments and Canadian wheat offer; harvest prospects	470
227	S. of S. to G. of I., Food Dept. Tel. 25996	13	Refers to No. 203 and conveys War Cabinet's decision as in No. 219	472
228	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 9867	13	Thanks for No. 227; and hopes for early decision on rate of imports for 1944	473
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 7–12, 17	16	Refers to No. 205; army relief in Bengal; Canadian wheat offer; Bengal procurement scheme; general food situation; Punjab's and other Govts' attitudes to food controls; Legislative Assembly's debate on food situation and demand for enquiry; telegraphic appreciations on food situation; report on Bengal cholera epidemic; coal shortage	474

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(November)		
233	Minutes of Governors' Conference (extract)	19–20	Wavell's opening remarks and summary of food discussion; Governors' comments on summary	480
234	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 3–4	19	Refers to No. 213; Wavell's report on visit to Bengal; world food shortage; overseas relief offers; Assembly's discussions on suggested enquiry into famine	485
237	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2562, para. 1	23	Informs him of main conclusions of Governors' Conference on food question	489
238	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3, 5, 9, 11	23–4	Refers to No. 209; food imports; Legislature's discussions on suggested food enquiry; Governors' discussions on food situation; coal situation; rationing and price control in Punjab and Sind	489
242	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 14–15	25	Refers to No. 230; Bengal procurement scheme; price control in Punjab	501
		(December)		
250	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–4	3	Council statement by Braund on Bengal situation; discussions with Punjab Ministry on wheat price control	518
255	Wavell to Rutherford Letter (extract)	8	Explains his continuing anxieties on Bengal situation	528
257	Glancy to Wavell Letter 475 (extract)	8	Introduction of food control in Punjab	530
259	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4, 7–10	9	Refers to Nos. 226 and 234; food shipments; overseas relief offers; Bengal situation; price control and rationing of foodgrains in Punjab, Sind and other Provinces	531
260	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 9	9	Importance of Grow More Food Campaign	536
267	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–5, 7–9	16	Viceroy's inspection of conditions in Orissa; rationing in Bengal; food control in Punjab and Sind; coal situation	544
275	G.-G. (Food Dept.) to S. of S. Tel. 11305	21	Informs him of increase in Defence Services' foodgrain requirements for 1944; and reiterates necessity for imports	558
276	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2807–S	22	Refers to No. 275; imperative that H.M.G. give all help possible in 1944	560
277	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2808–S	22	Reports further visit to Bengal and comments on situation	560
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 10–13, 15–16	22	Viceroy's visit to Assam and Bengal; coal situation; food control; situation in Travancore and Cochin	562
290	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	30	Refers to No. 259; possibility of increased food shipments	582
		1944		
		(January)		
292	S. of S. to G. of I., Food Dept. Tel. 73	1	Refers to No. 275; explains difficulties in fresh approach to Cabinet; indicates nature of brief required; and asks for more	585

	Name and number	Date (January)	Main subject or subjects	Page
292	(*cont.*)		general information on relief and mortality situation for use with M.P.s	
293	Amery to Wavell Tel. 7	1	Is anxious Food Dept. understand No. 292 is intended to be helpful	588
295	Wavell to Amery Tel. 26–S	4	Refers to No. 293; stresses importance of assurance of 1m. tons foodgrains imports in 1944; considers Cabinet must trust his judgement; and offers to send high official to explain situation to it	590
297	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 118	5	Refers to No. 299 and repeats appreciation from Govt. of Bengal	592
298	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 9	5–6	Refers to No. 260; publicity for Grow More Food Campaign	592
299	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 103	6	Refers to No. 292, para. 9 and sends appreciation of food, relief, rehabilitation and mortality situation in Bengal	596
300	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 141	6	Refers to No. 297 and repeats further appreciation from Govt. of Bengal on mortality situation	599
305	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	6	Viceroy's tel. on shipping for foodgrains (No. 295); suggestion of sending someone to explain position to Cabinet	608
309	Amery to Leathers Letter	8	Asks for further meeting with him when reply received to No. 292	613
310	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	8	Coal situation	613
316	G.–G. (Food Dept.) to S. of S. Tel. 297	11	Supplies detailed brief on food situation asked for in No. 292	623
317	Amery to Wavell Tel. 43	11	Refers to No. 295 and explains why full and watertight answers are needed to questions in No. 292	626
319	Leathers to Amery Letter	11	Refers to No. 309; expects it will be possible to divert from India wheat already en route or yet to be shipped	628
321	Wavell to Amery Tel. 98–S	12	Refers to No. 317 and explains why Indian food situation should not be judged by U.K. standards	633
324	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7, 9, 11	12	Food Dept. Conference on prices; special Provincial reports on public health and food situation; Council discussion on famine enquiry	636
325	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	12	Action taken on No. 316	641
326	Wavell to Amery Tel. 99–S	12	Informs him of his statement to Council on famine enquiry, and of Council discussion; and asks for his views	645
327	Wavell to Amery Tel. 100–S	12	Refers to No. 326 and submits draft terms of reference	646
328	Wavell to Amery Tel. 106–S	13	Notes Cabinet decision against use of Section 93 in Bengal; now even more necessary to grant request for imports	646

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*January*)		
333	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 7, 11, 13	18	Bengal food control and medical situation; importance of food imports; general food situation; coal situation	648
335	Amery to Leathers Letter	20	Encloses Nos. 347 and 321 and suggests, if he wishes further discussion, matter might be taken to Committee on Indian Financial Questions	658
339	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1840	22	Refers to No. 326; feels enquiry should cover all-India; offers suggestions on its composition and terms of reference; and believes it should be launched without delay	663
344	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3–5, 7–8	25–8	Refers to No. 305; need for food imports; general food situation; Viceroy's visit to U.P. and Bombay	669
346	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	27	Meeting with Leathers on food imports	675
347	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 63	28	Memorandum by Amery on Shipment of Food Grains to India	678
		(*February*)		
352	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	1	Importance of food imports	690
353	Wavell to Amery Tel. 223–S	2	Refers to No. 339 and reports discussion in Council on famine enquiry	693
354	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 77	4	Memorandum by Llewellin on Shipments of Food Grains to India	694
358	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 16th Conclusions Minute 6	7	Decision that Cabinet Committee should further examine Indian request for food imports with reference to statistical basis of No. 347	700
359	Wavell to Amery Tel. 259–S	8	Refers to No. 321 and urges immediate decision on food imports	703
363	Amery to Wavell Tel. 133	8	Refers to No. 359; informs him of War Cabinet decision as in No. 358; and asks that any observations be sent most immediate	705
364	Wavell to Amery Tel. 280–S	9	Refers to No. 363; warns of seriousness of situation; considers rigid statistical approach futile; stresses psychological importance of imports and maintains H.M.G. must trust opinion of Viceroy or replace him	706
365	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 281–S via India Office	9	Refers to No. 364 and appeals for his help	707
367	War Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements Paper I.F.R. (44) 2	9	Memorandum by Butler on The Statistical Basis for the Government of India's Case	709
370	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4	10	Bengal situation; Casey's views on Famine enquiry; general food situation and need for imports; Young's plan for coal production and distribution	711

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(February)		
371	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	10–11	Cabinet discussion on shipping for food imports	717
372	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 99	11	Report by Butler on Indian Foodgrain Requirements	719
373	Butler to Churchill Minute	11	Reports conclusions of Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements	721
375	Churchill to Wavell Tel. 3721 via India Office	12	Refers to No. 365; will help him all he can but Wavell must not ask the impossible	723
376	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 103	13	Note by Butler circulating draft telegram to Wavell conveying conclusions as in No. 372	723
377	Amery to Wavell Tel. 3795	14	Refers to No. 353; suggests early enquiry to recommend administrative improvements with more comprehensive enquiry later; sketches terms of reference and discusses chairmanship and personnel of first enquiry	725
378	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 19th Conclusions	14	Consideration of draft tel. in No. 376	727
379	Churchill to Wavell Tel. 152 via India Office	15	War Cabinet has given much thought to India's difficulties but is unable to find shipping	729
380	Amery to Wavell Tel. 155	15	Is sorry for disappointing War Cabinet decision	730
381	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4–5, 13	15	Rationing in Bengal; general food situation; proposals for coal reorganisation; Cabinet discussion on food imports (No. 378)	730
382	Wavell to Amery Tel. 332–S	16	Explains damage likely to be done by War Cabinet decision (No. 378); and asks that H.M.G. approach U.S. for shipping or allow India to appeal to U.N.R.R.A.	734
383	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 333–S via India Office	16	Thanks for No. 379; appreciates strategical situation but feels so strongly that is asking for reconsideration	736
384	Mountbatten to Chiefs of Staff Tel. Seacos 95 via Air Ministry	16	Supports Wavell's request in No. 382 that U.S. be approached for shipping for food imports	736
386	Auchinleck to Chiefs of Staff Tel. 58587/COS via Air Ministry	17	Refers to No. 382 and supports plea for food imports	737
388	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 22nd Conclusions Minute 1	17	Decision to refer No. 382 to Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements	739
389	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1 and PS.	17	Cabinet decision in No. 378; Wavell's further tel. (No. 382)	740
391	War Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements Paper I.F.R. (44) 4	19	Report on second meeting of Committee	743
393	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 23rd Conclusions Minute 6	21	Decision to ship 50,000 tons of wheat to India in place of Iraq barley and to ask Wavell to report on savings in military imports	749

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*February*)		
397	Amery to Wavell Tel. 4545	23	Informs him of War Cabinet decision as in No. 393	753
399	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	24–5	Latest development in foodgrains position	755
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 8	25	Cabinet decision on food imports (No. 393). Viceroy's visit to Madras	757
402	Wavell to Amery Tel. 49–S.C.	26	Refers to No. 397; will do his best to hold food situation; but warns H.M.G. of apprehended result of their policy	762
		(*March*)		
408	Wavell to Amery Tel. 459–S	4	Refers to No. 402; indicates measures proposed, in consultation with Mountbatten and Auchinleck, for reduction of wheat deficit; and intends to ask Mountbatten to seek U.S. assistance through Stilwell	775
409	Minutes by Amery and Churchill P. 6/44	4–5	Action on No. 408	777
410	Amery to Llewellin Letter	4	Larger Indian rice crop than estimated does not alter basis of G. of I.'s case for food imports	778
412	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 2596	7	Refers to No. 377; prefers single enquiry with interim report on Bengal; suggests terms of reference; discusses Chairmanship and personnel; and considers it should be constituted in early April	780
413	War Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements I.F.R. (44) third meeting	7	Consideration of Nos. 402 and 408 with Report by Amery to Churchill on conclusions of meeting	781
414	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 7	7	Food imports and export of groundnuts; economic and food situation in Bengal; general food situation	784
415	G. of I., Dept. of Education, Health and Lands to S. of S. Tel. 2597	8	Bengal mortality statistics for 1943	787
416	G. of I., Dept. of Education, Health and Lands to S. of S. Tel. 2642	8	Continues No. 415 and explains figures only give general indication of effects of famine	788
419	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	9	Consideration of No. 408 by Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements (No. 413); Llewellin's proposal that India should supply rice to Ceylon in exchange for wheat; current demands on shipping and apprehended shortage of wheat	797
422	Wavell to Amery Tel. 524–S	11	Cannot consider proposal to supply rice to Ceylon in exchange for wheat until main question of food imports is solved	801
423	Amery to Wavell Tel. 244	11	Explains background to rice–wheat exchange proposal; hopes reply will cover propaganda measures taken	801

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*March*)		
426	Wavell to Amery Tel. 535–S	12	Refers to No. 423; is unable to amend No. 422; and explains impossibility of rice exports at present	805
430	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	14	Rice–wheat exchange proposal; Casey's report on Bengal procurement; Mountbatten's discussion with Stilwell	808
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	16	Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements' attitude on food imports	813
432	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 165	18	Report by Chiefs of Staff on Economic Situation in India	816
433	Note of Informal Meeting of Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements	20	Consideration of No. 432	820
434	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 36th Conclusions Minute 4	20	Decision to supply India with 200,000 tons wheat April–Sept. 1944 and to press proposed exchange of 150,000 tons of rice for wheat with Ceylon	822
435	Amery to Wavell Tel. 6904	22	Informs him of War Cabinet decision as in No. 434	825
436	Amery to Wavell Tel. 274	22	Elaborates No. 435 and urges acceptance of rice–wheat exchange proposal	826
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 5	23	India's inability to supply food to Defence Services after July; coal control scheme	828
439	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	24	Background to Cabinet decision on wheat imports (No. 434)	833
440	Wavell to Amery Tel. 628–S	25	Refers to No. 435; explains why decision has not solved food problem; is informing Mountbatten and Auchinleck that owing to his inability to supply full requirements of defence services he is apprehensive of India's stability as base; and asks that Combined Chiefs of Staff be informed of his views	836
441	Wavell to Amery Tel. 3–U	25	Refers to Nos. 436 and 440; does not feel he is receiving P.M.'s or War Cabinet's support on food imports	837
444	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 12/44	27	Encloses Nos. 440 and 441; supports arguments of No. 440; arrangements for hearing Rowlands	840
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–5	29	Inadequacy of food imports promised in No. 435; Bihar food situation; decision to refuse further C.P.O. demands; Rowlands' departure	844
448	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	29	Wavell's latest food tels. (Nos. 440 and 441) and action thereon	850
		(*April*)		
451	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	5	Refers to No. 438; changing basis of G. of I.'s approach to H.M.G.; latest action on food; Casey's report on Bengal procurement	857
453	War Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements I.F.R. (44) fourth meeting	6	Discussion with Rowlands	862

	Name and number	*Date* (*April*)	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
454	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4, 17	8	Return of official confidence in Bengal but food situation still critical; Amery's fight for food imports	865
457	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3	12	Conversation with Casey on food situation; rain damage to crops	874
458	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	13	Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements' meeting with Rowlands	875
465	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 10, 12	18	Refers to No. 451; loss of foodgrains in Bombay fire; plea for food imports; Bengal procurement; Grow More Food campaign; labour and rice for Ceylon; Rowlands' return	895
466	Wavell to Amery Tel. 805–S	19	Asks when he will get further decision on food imports; revises estimates in Nos. 408 and 440; and states he is no longer able to meet defence requirements	899
468	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	20	Wavell's latest tel. on food situation (No. 466); Rowlands' departure	904
470	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 216	21	Memorandum by Amery on Shipment of Foodgrains to India	907
471	Cherwell to Amery Letter	21	Agrees to conclusion in No. 470 but regrets lack of reference to action against hoarders	910
472	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 16/44	21	Refers to No. 470 and explains relation of food imports to other measures to relieve strain on India's economy	911
474	Amery to Cherwell Letter	22	Refers to No. 471 and encloses note by Kirby explaining difficulties of food control in India	913
476	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 55th Conclusions	24	Decision to replace Bombay losses and to prepare tel. from Churchill to Roosevelt urging U.S. shipping assistance	920
478	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	26	Refers to No. 458; Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements' meeting with Rowlands	925
480	Mountbatten to Chiefs of Staff Tel. Sac 1911 via Air Ministry	27	Refers to No. 466; considers that unless other arrangements to import wheat are made promptly, British and U.S. military shipping space must be used for this purpose; seeks permission to inform Stilwell	928
482	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3, 8	27	Cabinet discussion on food question (No. 476) and drafting of tel. to Roosevelt; danger of over-estimating storm damage; conversation with Kirby; food situation in Bihar and Bengal	933
484	Chiefs of Staff to Mountbatten Tel. Cossea 94 via Air Ministry	28	Refers to No. 480; food situation is under review by Cabinet and he should say nothing to Stilwell	936
485	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 59th Conclusions Minute 1	28	Agreement on wording of tel. from Churchill to Roosevelt on food situation	937

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*April*)		
486	Amery to Wavell Tel. 393 Guard	29	Text of tel. agreed in No. 485	938
488	Wavell to Amery Tel. ? 900–S Guard	30	Thanks for No. 486	940
489	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 901–S Guard via India Office	30	Is most grateful for his generous assistance on food imports	940
		(*May*)		
490	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	1	Churchill's tel. to Roosevelt on food situation	940
504	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4	9	Interpretation of crop forecasts; coal situation and Young's recommendations	956
508	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	11	Churchill's tel. to Roosevelt on food situation	964
510	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	16	Work of Friends' Ambulance Unit in Bengal; extension of Grow More Food campaign	968
515	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	23	Food situation	982
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 13	30	Food forecasts; inclusion of Purshottamdas on Famine Enquiry	991
		(*June*)		
523	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–8	2	Roosevelt's reply to Churchill's tel. (No. 486) on food situation; transport supplies	996
524	Amery to Wavell Tel. 506 Guard	3	Repeats Roosevelt's reply to tel. in No. 486	999
525	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1162–S Guard	4	Refers to No. 524; presses for immediate decision on food imports; estimates reaction of Council to news; and asks what he should tell Mountbatten	1000
526	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1163–S Guard	4	Refers to No. 525 and sends statement on food situation for Cabinet	1000
527	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8–9	6	Food situation; inclusion of Purshottamdas on Famine Enquiry	1002
530	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 20/44	8	Reports consideration of tel. in No. 524 and Nos. 525 and 526 by Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements; encloses draft reply to No. 526	1010
531	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–5	8	Proceedings of Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements on 7 June	1012
535	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 12	12	Proposed visit of senior Ministry of Food official to India; substitution of Mody for Purshottamdas on Famine Enquiry	1019
537	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 12	15	Chiefs of Staff investigation into freeing of military cargo space for food imports	1024
541	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	20	Refers to No. 531; food imports; Bengal rice procurement	1033
542	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1, PS.	21–2	Food imports	1037
547	Wavell to Churchill Tel. 1288–S Guard via India Office	24	Explains importance of food imports and securing an early decision thereon; seeks his help on matter	1044

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(June)		
548	Amery to Wavell Tel. 14201 Guard	24	Refers to No. 526 and informs him of H.M.G 's decision to supply extra 200,000 tons of wheat in period July–Sept. 1944 with further reviews of situation in Aug. and Nov.	1045
550	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	26	Decision on food imports	1047
551	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 351	27	Memorandum by Amery on Shipment of Foodgrains to India	1049
552	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	27	Decision on food imports	1050
553	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1318-S Guard	29	Informs him of Council's consideration of food imports decision and its approval of immediate announcement	1053
554	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1319-S	29	Is glad for food imports assurance and thanks him for his help	1055
556	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 8587	29	Refers to No. 548; text of proposed statement on food imports	1056
560	Amery to Wavell Tel. 14557	30	Asks him to defer issuing statement in No. 556 until he hears further	1059
561	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 23/44	30	Encloses Nos. 553 and 556; explains reasons for statement	1059
		(July)		
565	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2, PS.	4	Statement on food imports; personnel of Famine Enquiry	1063
566	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1352–S Guard	5	Refers to No. 553; informs him of reactions to statement; and warns further imports will be needed to avert famine	1069
568	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	6	Reactions to statement on food imports	1070
574	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	11	Food situation; personnel of Famine Enquiry	1076
589	Amery to Wavell Tel. 15939 Guard	18	Is attempting to expedite Chiefs of Staff August consideration of food situation	1100
593	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4, 7	19	Food situation; procurement and rationing in Bengal; coal situation; business member of Famine Enquiry	1105
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	27	French's visit to India; business member of Famine Enquiry and position of Travancore and Cochin in Enquiry	1125
		(August)		
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	1	Meeting of Food Advisory Council; Famine Enquiry to hear evidence *in camera*	1139
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 12–13	9	Chiefs of Staff review of food shipments; Woodhead	1171
639	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	10	General food situation	1179
660	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6, 8	15	General food situation; fulfilling demands of Central Provision Office	1199
664	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 11	17	Chiefs of Staff review of food shipments	1205

	Name and number	Date	Main subject or subjects	Page
		(*August*)		
668	War Cabinet Chiefs of Staff Paper C.O.S. (44) 752 (O)	19	Report on Economic Situation in India—Foodgrains	1210
670	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 10	23	General food situation	1213
672	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–6	24	Chiefs of Staff review of food shipments (No. 668); Coyne's letter on state of Indian food storage	1224
674	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6, 11	28	No decision yet on food imports; shortage of infant foods	1228
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	31	Difficulties in securing decision of food shipments	1232

CHAPTER 5

Administration and politics in the Provinces (including Bengal and its Governorship)

	Name and number	Date	Main subject or subjects	Page
		(*June 1943*)		
6	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–6	16	Seeks advice on question whether a Governor may abstain from inviting a person to form a Ministry on the ground of lack of confidence in him	9
12	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter, para. 3	19	Recent behaviour of Calcutta High Court	13
13	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 21	21	Possible formation of Ministries in Bihar, C.P., U.P., and Bombay	14
18	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 11–12, 21–2	26	Actions of Judiciary in Bengal; Bengal Ministerial difficulties	27
		(*July*)		
26	Linlithgow to Herbert Letter	2	Advises, in reply to No. 6, that a Governor would not be justified in withholding an invitation to form a Ministry from a leader otherwise qualified because of his own lack of confidence in him	41
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 15	6	Huq's attack on Herbert	51
35	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 11	12	Viceroy's discussions with Dow, Lewis and Clow	63
49	Linlithgow to Glancy Letter	16	Punjab political situation and need for understanding of Governor's special responsibilities in preventing breakdown of Ministry	90
53	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 16	19	Sind revenue settlement	103
55	Glancy to Linlithgow Letter 460	20	Replies to No. 49; Khizar shows no greater communal partiality than Sikander; Shaukat's tour	110

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
70	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 16–18	4–10	Refers to No. 46; Bengal administrative situation and Herbert's Governorship	147
73	Glancy to Linlithgow Letter 465 (extract)	6	Relations between Ministry and Muslim League; Congress and Sikh activities	161
75	Linlithgow to Herbert Tel. 1686–S	8	Explains his anxieties on the administration of Bengal and asks for very early report	164
76	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter	10	Replies to No. 75	165
82	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3	16	Herbert's Governorship of Bengal	173
86	Linlithgow to Glancy Letter	17	States anxieties on Punjab food administration and stresses importance placed on adequate wheat exports from Punjab	178
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 8	21	Bengal situation and Herbert's proposals for filling certain senior administrative posts	180
89	Cunningham to Linlithgow Report 16 (extract)	24	Muslim League successes in bye-elections	186
90	Herbert to Linlithgow Letter	28	Measures taken to improve food administration; responsibilities for situation	187
91	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 7	30	Suggestion for Herbert's replacement	190
92	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 356–S.C.	30	Reports Herbert unlikely to be fit for at least one month; recommends his replacement and appointment of *ad interim* Governor; favours Rutherford for the temporary post; and emphasises importance of able permanent replacement	194
93	Memorandum by G. of I., Food Dept.	undated	Defects in food administration in Bengal and proposals for their remedy	196
		(*September*)		
95	Christie to Abell Letter 60/S	2	Describes contributions of Govt. of India and Govt. of Bengal towards improvement of Bengal food situation	205
96	Linlithgow to Cunningham Letter, para. 1	3–6	Possibility that Muslim League successes may be regarded as British victory	207
97	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1932–S	4	Considers Bengal moving rapidly towards Section 93 situation; reports discussion in Council, and his own anxieties, on constitutional implications; and estimates reactions to supersession of Ministerial government in Bengal	208
100	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 2–3	6	Bengal food administration; Council discussion on possibility of Bengal going into Section 93	211
104	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 20541	9	Replies to No. 97; discusses alternative processes by which Section 93 might be reached; and asks to be consulted before action is taken	222

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(September)		
109	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1993–S	11	Refers to No. 104; outlines process by which Section 93 might be reached in Bengal; expresses confidence in Rutherford; reports Council's reactions to situation; and assures him action will not be taken without prior consultation	230
112	Cunningham to Linlithgow Report 17, para. 3	13	Muslim League activity in N.-W.F.P.	245
118	Glancy to Linlithgow Letter 469	16	Khizar's meeting with Jinnah	269
124	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2089–S	20	Refers to No. 125; commends suggestion of amendment to Section 57 of Govt. of India Act	283
125	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2090–S	20	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on food and political situation in Bengal	284
129	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 2–6, 16, 23	20–1	Herbert's condition; suggestions for Governorship of Bengal; replacement of Herbert; suggestion of amendment to Section 57; Punjab Ministry's attitude to foodgrain procurement and difficulties of central action; discussion with Metropolitan on Bengal situation	295
131	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2107–S	22	Repeats Rutherford's conclusion as to advisability of going into Section 93 in Bengal or preferably amendment to Section 57 as proposed in No. 125	303
138	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 372–S.C.	24	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on food and relief situation in Bengal	315
140	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 22028	25	Refers to No. 124; awaits results of Delhi examination into proposed amendment of Section 57; but is inclined to prefer action under Section 102 or 126A or both	319
143	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 391–S.C.	26	Refers to No. 138 and repeats reply to Rutherford authorising him to use his own judgement as to pressure on Bengal Ministry	322
146	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 5, PS.	27	Bengal situation and proposal to amend Section 57; talk with Glancy on Punjab procurements	324
147	Linlithgow to Glancy Letter, paras. 1–3	27	Concern over Punjab attitude on food question; importance of holding food prices down	326
148	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 407–S.C.	28	Reports efforts to secure Punjab co-operation on food question	327
149	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 420–S.C.	29	Reports conversation with Khizar and further conversation with Glancy on Punjab procurements	328
150	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 421–S.C.	29	Refers to Nos. 124 and 140; reports Menon's doubts on proposed amendment to Section 57; and will discuss further with Rutherford	329

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*September*)		
151	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 430–S.C.	29–30	Repeats tel. from Rutherford on situation in Bengal	330
		(*October*)		
154	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 22484	1	Refers to No. 150; Menon's comments do not increase his liking for amendment to Section 57	339
156	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–3, 6, 11–12	1–4	Refers to No. 137; Punjab attitude on food question; conversation with Khizar; Ministerial responsibilities for food situation; scheme for requisitioning Punjab wheat; Rutherford's visit	344
157	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 4	1	Political situation in Bengal	353
158	Rutherford to Linlithgow Letter	2	Background to Bengal situation and recommendations for its remedy	357
166	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 22964	7	Asks for his help in preparing Commons statement on food situation and advice on attitude he should adopt towards past and present Bengal Governments	380
169	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 531–S.C.	8	Reports measures taken to increase supply of foodgrains from Punjab	384
175	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2173–S	10	Refers to No. 166 and supplies appreciation	390
176	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2180–S	11	Reports discussion with Rutherford on proposal to amend Section 57 or Section 52 (1) (*a*); feels Rutherford's special responsibility under Section 52 (1) (*a*) is already attracted; and asks for early confirmation of this view	395
177	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 23381	12	Refers to No. 176 and states that question whether Rutherford's special responsibility is attracted is for him to decide, but would agree with him that it was	395
178	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 2260–S	17	Repeats tel. from Rutherford stating he feels unjustified in employing Section 52 (1) (*a*) without specific assurance from Amery; disagrees with Rutherford's interpretation; but recommends that assurance be given	396
179	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 23920	18	Agrees to recommendation in No. 178	397
181	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2313–S	21	Refers to No. 179; has informed Rutherford they agree he may employ Section 52 (1) (*a*)	400
183	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 3	21	Bengal Governorship	401
187	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	25	Bengal Ordinance to control destitutes	407
192	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2395–S	29	Recommends that Rutherford be replaced immediately by first-class administrator	413

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*October*)		
193	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2396–S	29	Sends appreciation of Bengal situation and asks him to stress its seriousness	413
		(*November*)		
196	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 47/43	1	Encloses No. 192 and asks for early decision on Bengal Governorship	417
197	Memorandum by Wavell para. 5	1	Question whether amendment to Section 57 is needed to enable Governors to act to prevent economic breakdowns	417
199	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–8, 13	1–2	Viceroy's visit to Bengal; assessment of Bengal Ministry and relief administration; calibre of Bengal I.C.S.; measures instituted to improve situation; Herbert's condition; Bengal Governorship; attitude to food policies of Punjab Ministry; Enclosures: (1) Viceroy's visit to Contai (2) Statement to Bengal Ministry (3) Announcement issued at Calcutta (4) Tel. from Wavell to Auchinleck on use of army in Bengal	430
200	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2414–S	2	Measures being taken by army to assist Govt. of Bengal	443
204	Churchill to Amery Minute M. 778/3	3	Hopes to let him have decision on Governorship of Bengal next week	446
205	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 3	3	Bengal Governorship	446
208	Rutherford to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–6	4	Food administration situation in Bengal	451
209	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	6	Bengal Governorship	451
210	Churchill to Casey Tel. 3464 Nocop	7	Offers him Governorship of Bengal	453
211	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1200	8	Informs him of No. 210 but doubts whether Casey will accept	454
212	Casey to Churchill Tel. 2527	8	Refers to No. 210; is prepared to accept unless term must be five years and unless title essential	454
213	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–7	8	Army relief and political and administrative situation in Bengal; Punjab Ministry's attitude to food question	455
218	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 50/43	9	Refers to No. 212; no difficulty as to tenure; but would like to consult Wavell on knighthood	464
223	Amery to Wavell Tel. 25947	11	Refers to No. 211; conveys substance of No. 212; and asks whether he strongly objects to Casey's rejection of knighthood or peerage	469
224	Minute by Churchill	11	Refers to No. 218 and will talk it over with Casey	469
225	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2491–S	12	Refers to No. 223; is delighted Casey is willing and considers no need for title	470

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*November*)		
226	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	12	Casey's willingness to accept Bengal Governorship	470
229	Amery to Churchill Tel. Grand?	15	Informs him of Wavell's report on Rutherford's health, and hopes he can reach early decision on Casey	473
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2, 4, 7, 9	16	Refers to No. 205; army relief in Bengal; Bengal Governorship; Bengal procurement scheme; Punjab's and other Govts' attitudes to food controls	474
233	Minutes of Governors' Conference (extract)	19–20	Wavell's opening remarks and summary of food discussion; Governors' comments on summary	480
234	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	19	Refers to No. 213; Wavell's report on visit to Bengal; Bengal Governorship	485
236	Amery to Churchill Tel. Grand 161 via Air Ministry and C.-in-C., Middle East	23	Repeats tel. from Wavell stressing urgency of appointment of Bengal Governor and supports request for early decision	488
238	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 5, 8, 11	23–4	Refers to No. 209; Bengal Governorship and reinforcements for Bengal administration; Governors' discussions on food administration; impressions of Governors; rationing and price control in Punjab and Sind	489
242	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 14–15	25	Refers to No. 230; Casey and Governorship of Bengal; Bengal procurement scheme; price control in Punjab	501
		(*December*)		
248	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	2	Viceroy's visit to Punjab and Peshawar	513
250	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–5, 11	3	Council statement by Braund on Bengal situation; visit to Punjab and Peshawar; discussions with Punjab Ministry, on wheat price control; Herbert's condition	518
254	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2678–S	8	Refers to No. 223; seeks information on Casey's position; and restresses urgency of appointment	528
255	Wavell to Rutherford Letter (extract)	8	Explains his continuing anxieties on Bengal situation	528
257	Glancy to Wavell Letter 475 (extract)	8	Introduction of food control in Punjab	530
258	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1304	9	Refers to No. 254; informs him of tel. from Churchill confirming Casey's acceptance; and hopes Casey will reach India by late January	531
259	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7–10	9	Bengal situation and Bengal Governorship; price control and rationing of foodgrains in Punjab, Sind and other Provinces	531
260	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	9	Casey's plans	536

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*December*)		
263	Amery to Churchill Tel. Grand 555 Nocop via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa	10	Feels Curtin should be informed of Casey's appointment before Royal Approval and submits draft for this purpose	540
266	Churchill's Private Office to Martin Tel. Grand 607 via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa	15	Repeats Curtin's thanks for tel. on Casey's appointment	544
267	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–7	16	Viceroy's visit to Orissa; rationing in Bengal and Bengal Governorship; Herbert's death; food control in Punjab and Sind	544
268	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–7	16	Refers to No. 238; Casey's plans; Governors' Conference and Wavell's impressions of Governors	548
274	Clow to Wavell Report 77, para. 2	19	Air raid on Dinjan and Tinsukia	557
277	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2808–S	22	Comments on situation in Bengal; considers Section 93 and consequent administrative changes; delay in Casey's arrival dangerous	560
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 10–12, 14–15	22	Viceroy's visit to Assam and Bengal; impressions of Bengal as reported in No. 277; Provincial Ministries' lack of co-operation on food control	562
279	Amery to Casey Tel. OZ 4236 via Air Ministry and C.-in-C., Middle East	23	Informs him of gist of No. 277 and asks if he is agreeable to earlier arrival in India	568
280	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	23	Casey's arrangements; possibility of Section 93 in Bengal; suggestion that this might be accompanied by appointment of Indian Executive Council and followed by introduction of Swiss constitutional system	569
283	Amery to Wavell Tel. 29452	24	Refers to No. 277; enquires by what process he anticipates Section 93 situation would be brought about; sets out issues involved; and discusses possible timing and changes among officials	572
287	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	29	Limits of Provincial autonomy	577
290	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	30	Casey's arrangements	582
		1944 (*January*)		
294	Wavell to Rutherford Letter	3	Asks his advice on wisdom of 'drastic intervention by the Centre' in Bengal and estimate of additional staff Governor would need in that case	588
297	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 118	5	Refers to No. 299 and repeats appreciation from Govt. of Bengal	592

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*January*)		
298	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 13	5–6	Srivastava's proposals for controlling Bengal Ministry	592
299	G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 103	6	Sends appreciation of food, relief, rehabilitation and mortality situation in Bengal	596
301	Wavell to Amery Tel. 38–S	6	Refers to No. 283; informs him of recommendations of Food Dept. and his letter to Rutherford (No. 294); considers alternative methods of control; and favours full application of Section 93	600
302	Wavell to Amery Tel. 39–S	6	Refers to No. 301; repeats Rutherford's recommendation, in reply to No. 294, for partial application of Section 93; maintains this would not work	604
305	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 3	6	Bengal Coalition Party's manifesto denouncing Srivastava	608
306	Wavell to Amery Tel. 50–S	7	Refers to No. 301 and offers to postpone immediate action if Casey wishes	611
308	Amery to Wavell Tel. 657	7	Is circulating Nos. 301 and 302 to Cabinet; asks him to reconsider his rejection of (1) controls over Ministry without recourse to Section 93 (2) partial application of Section 93	612
310	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	8	Background to tel. (No. 301) recommending Section 93 in Bengal	613
311	Wavell to Amery Tel. 64–S	9	Refers to No. 308; is unable to advocate controls over Ministry, either separately or in combination; and sees grave difficulty in partial application of Section 93	616
312	Amery to Wavell Tel. 40	10	Enquiry about Council views on Bengal	617
313	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 18	10	Memorandum by Amery on Proposed Suspension of the Bengal Ministry and Assumption of Powers by the Governor under Section 93 of the G. of I. Act	617
314	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 20	10	Memorandum by Amery on Bengal situation enclosing draft statement	621
315	Wavell to Amery Tel. 79–S	11	Refers to No. 312 and feels majority of Council would favour proposed action though Indian members would not wish to take responsibility	622
320	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 5th Conclusions Minute 1	11	Rejection of proposal to apply Section 93 in Bengal	629
322	Amery to Wavell Tel. 936	12	Reports War Cabinet Conclusions on Bengal as in No. 320	634
323	Amery to Wavell Tel. 48	12	Hopes he is not disappointed with No. 322; feels Casey should not visit Delhi until after some days in Bengal	635
324	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 12	13	Discussions with Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy	636

	Name and number	Date	Main subject or subjects	Page
		(*January*)		
325	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–2	12	Cabinet discussion on Bengal (No. 320); reinforcements for Bengal services	641
328	Wavell to Amery Tel. 106–S	13	Notes decision in No. 322	646
329	Wavell to Amery Tel. 108–S	13	Refers to No. 323; has already advised Casey against Delhi visit	647
333	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	18	Bengal food control and medical situation	648
334	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	19	Timing of Casey's appointment	654
344	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4–5, 7–8	25–8	Use of Section 93 in Bengal and Casey's staff; Viceroy's visit to U.P. and Bombay	669
345	Casey to Wavell Letter	26	Consults him on measures for curbing criticism of govt. food policy	673
		(*February*)		
352	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	1	Refers to No. 325; Cabinet discussion on Bengal (No. 320) and reinforcements for Bengal services	690
356	Wavell to Casey Letter F. 188 (34)–GG/43	6	Refers to No. 345; considers powers available are adequate; advises he makes matter one of individual judgement	696
357	Casey to Wavell Letter	7	Impressions of Bengal administration	697
366	Cunningham to Wavell Report 3 (extract)	9	Concern at personal favours done by Ministers; failure of Independence Day in N.-W.F.P.	708
370	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	10	Casey's staff and Bengal situation	711
381	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 11	15	Rationing in Bengal, Casey's criticism of press and opposition attitude (No. 345), and reinforcements for Bengal services; Viceroy's visit to Punjab	730
389	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	17	Comments on No. 345	740
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8, 11	25	Viceroy's visit to Madras; Bengal services and food situation	757
		(*March*)		
414	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2, 7	7	Viceroy's visit to C.P.; Casey's letters on reinforcements for Bengal services	784
429	Colville to Wavell Letter 14	13	Future arrangements for Gandhi and likely consequences of Congress Ministry in Bombay	807
430	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	14	Casey's report on Bengal procurement	808
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 7, 9	16	Refers to No. 414; impressions of Twynam and Hope; benefit of administrative improvements in Bengal	813
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	23	Bengal administrative situation	828

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*March*)		
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 14	29	Reinforcements for Bengal services; difficulties with Govt. of Bihar; Jinnah's activities in Punjab	844
		(*April*)		
451	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4	5	Casey's report on Bengal procurement; effect of removal of military medical personnel from Bengal	857
452	Glancy to Wavell Letter 499 (extract)	6	Jinnah's visit to Lahore	861
454	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4	8	Viceroy's visit to Bihar and Bengal; Bengal procurement	865
457	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	12	Conversation with Casey on food administration	874
458	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 6	13	Governors' letters	875
459	Mudie to Jenkins Letter 285–G.B.	14	Encloses note of conversation with Khaliquzzaman	878
460	Glancy to Wavell Letter 500	14	Khizar Hyat Khan's fears over Jinnah's demand that Ministry should be regarded as a Muslim League one	880
461	Wavell to Glancy Letter F. 90 (5)–GG/42	15	Agrees with line taken by Glancy in No. 460	882
465	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3–4, 9	18	Explosion and fire in Bombay docks; Bengal procurement; withdrawal of army medical officers from Bengal; 'limp' and 'virile' Provinces; Jinnah's activities in Punjab	895
468	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 3	20	Commons' discussion on continuance of Section 93	904
469	Glancy to Wavell Letter 502	21	Jinnah's further visit to Punjab; Azizul Haque	906
477	Glancy to Wavell Letter	24	Khizar Hyat Khan's terms for agreement with Jinnah; reasons for Shaukat Hyat Khan's dismissal	922
478	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–4, 6, 10	26	Explosion and fire in Bombay docks; compensation for victims of Bombay disaster; Punjab Ministry's difficulties; Casey's visit to Delhi	925
482	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 8–9	27	Viceroy's tours of Bihar and Bengal; Punjab Ministry's difficulties	933
		(*May*)		
490	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 3	1	Viceroy's visit to Assam; Punjab Ministry's difficulties	940
493	Daultana to Turnbull Letter	2	Encloses resolutions passed at Punjab Provincial Muslim League Session at Sialkot 28–30 April	945
503	Glancy to Wavell Letter 506	8	Aftermath of Shaukat Hyat Khan's dismissal	953
504	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	9	Punjab situation	956

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*May*)		
510	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3–5	16	Developments in Punjab Ministerial situation; Lewis' difficulties with Parlakimedi; work of Friends' Ambulance Unit in Bengal	968
516	Glancy to Wavell Letter 508–F.L., paras. 2–3, 5	23	Khizar Hyat Khan's relations with Muslim League; Ministerial appointments; Sikh politics	985
517	Cunningham to Wavell Report 10, para. 4	23	Reactions in N.-W.F.P. to Punjab Ministerial developments	987
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7, 17	30	Punjab and Orissa Ministerial situations; Casey's proposal for Commission on Bengal administration	991
		(*June*)		
527	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 12–13	6	Nazimuddin's difficulties with Speaker of Bengal Assembly; Khizar's estimate of effect on Punjab of Muslim League's actions	1002
528	Glancy to Wavell Letter 510–F.L. (extract)	7	Khizar Hyat Khan's expulsion from Muslim League	1009
531	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	8	Possibility of Section 93 in Bengal	1012
535	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 10, PS.	12–13	Ministerial situations in Bengal and Orissa; policy towards Muslim League National Guards in Punjab; conversation with Khizar Hyat Khan	1019
538	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 326 (Proof)	17	Note by Churchill circulating letter of 20 May from Casey	1028
540	Clow to Wavell Letter 112, para. 5	19	Governor's visit to Kohima battlefield	1032
541	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2–5	20	Bengal rice procurement; Bengal and Orissa Ministerial situations; conversation with Khizar Hyat Khan	1033
543	Dow to Wavell Letter 182–F.R., paras. 8–9	21	Land Alienation Bill; proposal for a Sind University	1038
545	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1282–S	23	Refers to No. 521, para. 17; asks his help in selecting Chairman of Bengal Administrative Enquiry	1040
549	Cunningham to Wavell Report 12, para. 4	24	Muslim League Committee of Action in N.-W.F.P.	1046
550	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	26	Bengal Ministerial situation	1047
552	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 12	27	Bengal Ministerial situation; Section 93 situation in Orissa; Muslim League National Guards; speeches by Provincial Ministers on conduct of neighbouring Ministries	1050
555	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1321–S	29	Discussions with Casey on Bengal Ministerial situation	1055
558	Amery to Wavell Tel. 573	29	Refers to No. 545; would prefer Bengal Administrative Enquiry to be part of all-India Enquiry	1057

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*July*)		
562	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1330–S	2	Refers to No. 558 but argues there is no case for all-India administrative Enquiry of type proposed in Bengal	1060
564	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 372	4	Memorandum by Amery on Ministerial Government in Bengal and Orissa	1062
565	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–7	4	Discussion with Casey on Bengal Ministerial situation; Bengal Administrative Enquiry; Orissa and Punjab political situations	1063
568	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–3	6	Bengal Ministerial situation; Bengal Administrative Enquiry	1070
574	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–5	11	Bengal Ministerial situation; political situation in Punjab, Orissa and Sind	1076
575	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 90th Conclusions Minute 5	12	Position in Bengal and Orissa	1082
578	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	13	Cabinet discussion on Section 93 in Bengal	1087
580	Amery to Wavell Tel. 605	14	Refers to No. 562; explains his anxieties on overlap between proposed Bengal Administrative Enquiry and other Enquiries; prefers all-India Enquiry proceeding Province by Province; and suggests possible Chairman for latter Enquiry	1090
583	Amery to Wavell Tel. 15787	15	Agrees generally with his recommendations on Bengal Ministerial situation	1096
593	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 8–9, 14	19	Procurement and rationing in Bengal; Bengal Administrative Enquiry; Bengal Ministerial situation; Viceroy's talks with Glancy, Chhotu Ram and Khizar Hyat Khan	1105
598	Wavell to Amery Tel. 188–S.C.	24	Refers to No. 580; is suggesting Casey postpones Bengal Administrative Enquiry until Famine Enquiry has examined Bengal; explains difficulties of over-all investigation into services	1115
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	27	Provincial politics; suggestion of non-official Advisers in Bombay	1125
		(*August*)		
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	1	Casey favours Section 93 in Bengal; Sind Ministerial situation	1139
619	Glancy to Wavell Letter 521 (extract)	2	Jinnah's further visit to Punjab; Unionist Party's propaganda; Sikh politics	1148
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 7, 11	9	Water problems in Bengal; non-official Advisers in Bombay	1171
639	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 7	10	Non-official Advisers in Bombay; conversation with Casey on Section 93 in Bengal	1179
660	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 7	16	Suggestion of Rowlands as Chairman of proposed Bengal Administrative Enquiry	1199

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
666	Colville to Wavell Report 28, para. 2	18	Bombay political parties prepare for Gandhi–Jinnah meeting	1209
670	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 6	23	Refers to No. 635; Provincial political situations; water experts for Bengal	1213
671	Glancy to Wavell Letter 522–F.L. (extract)	23	Repercussions of forthcoming Gandhi–Jinnah talks on Unionist Party and Sikhs	1223
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 12	31	Refers to No. 660; suggestion of Rowlands as Chairman of proposed Bengal Administrative Enquiry	1232

CHAPTER 6

The Indian States

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June 1943*)		
17	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 10–12	21	Proposal for grouping of smaller States	24
20	Fitze to Lothian Letter F. 376–P/42	25	Replies to Nos. 359 and 286 in Vol. III; post-war position of Hyderabad	33
		(*July*)		
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 7	5	Discussions with Princes on inflation during session of National Defence Council	51
35	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 10	12	Use of Gwyer in connection with possible merger of Deccan States	63
62	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 8	27	Refers to No. 17, paras. 11–12; proposals for grouping of smaller States	127
		(*August*)		
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 4	20	Viceroy's farewell tour of Mysore	180
88	Jinnah to Linlithgow Letter	23	Draws attention to Kashmir situation	186
91	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 3	28	Impressions of Maharaja of Mysore	190
		(*September*)		
99	Linlithgow to Jinnah Letter	6	Thanks for No. 88; is in close contact with Kashmir situation	210
100	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 9	7	Future of Indian States	211
103	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 15	8	Panchayats in States	218
111	Linlithgow to Amery Letter 22/H.E.	13	Future policy towards States	236
115	Jinnah to Linlithgow Letter	15	Asks permission to publish Nos. 88 and 99	255
136	Linlithgow to Jinnah Letter	23	Refers to No. 115; would prefer Nos. 88 and 99 not to be published	312

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*September*)		
153	Jinnah to Linlithgow Letter	30	Refers to No. 136; treatment of Muslims in Kashmir; will not publish correspondence 'at any rate for the present'	338
		(*October*)		
157	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 10	1	Linlithgow's letter on future of Indian States (No. 111)	353
183	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 8	21	Likely effects of admission of small States to Chamber of Princes	401
		(*November*)		
199	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 11	2	Mysore's contribution to War Purposes Fund	430
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 16	16	Refers to No. 183; admission of small States to Chamber of Princes	474
		(*December*)		
248	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	2	Indore's National War Front demonstration	513
251	Nawanagar to Wavell Letter	5	Requests he meet States' representatives to discuss outstanding problems	522
264	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2700–P.	11	Attitude towards conclusions of Residents' Conference on Small States and recommendations as to line to be taken with Princes	541
265	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2701–S	11	Refers to No. 264 and explains it amounts to marking time	543
273	Wavell to Nawanagar Letter	19	Refers to No. 251; unable to meet States' representatives yet but suggests he meets him in January	556
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 9	22	Jam Saheb's letter (No. 251), his reply (No. 273), and States' attitude to co-operative grouping	562
284	Amery to Wavell Tel. 29472	24	Concurs in conclusions in No. 264	574
287	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	29	Wylie's views on future of States	577
		1944		
		(*January*)		
338	Amery to Wavell Letter	21	Refers to Nos. 278, para. 9 and 287, para. 3; policy towards States	661
343	Chhatari to Lothian Letter 4–C	25	Post-war position of Hyderabad	668
		(*February*)		
350	Patiala to Wavell Letter	1	States' concern on attachment; requests that Wavell should meet States' representatives	686
361	Wavell to Amery Tel. 263–S	8	Recommends Kashmir, or failing him Bhopal, as States' representative at War Cabinet	703
368	Amery to Wavell Tel. 138	10	Agrees to proposals in No. 361 if internal situation in Kashmir will permit of Maharaja's absence	710

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(February)		
374	Wavell to Patiala Letter D.O.F. 88/5/GG/38	11	Refers to No. 350 and sees no advantage in meeting States' representatives on attachment scheme at present	721
385	Wavell to Amery Tel. 336–S	17	Refers to No. 368; appointment of Kashmir Prime Minister makes Maharaja's absence possible	737
395	Wavell to Amery Tel. 384–S	22	Repeats tel. from Jam Saheb requesting that States' views may be considered by H.M.G. before further action on attachment taken	751
396	Nawanagar to Wavell Tel. 254–G.T.	22	Considers text of Attachment Bill raises vital issues for States in general	753
398	Bhopal to Wavell Tel. (unnumbered)	23	Asks for three months' postponement of Attachment Bill to enable him to examine measure dispassionately	755
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	25	Protests on Attachment Bill	757
		(March)		
405	Wavell to Amery Tel. 444–P	1	Proposed reply to Jam Saheb's tel. in No. 395	772
406	Wavell to Bhopal Letter F. 88/5/GG/38	2–3	Thanks for No. 398 and sends copy of No. 407	773
407	Wylie to Nawanagar Letter D. 1054–P/44	3	Refers to No. 396 and tel. in No. 395; reasons why Wavell feels unable to recommend delaying Attachment Bill	774
419	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	9	Kathiawar Attachment Bill	797
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 5	16	Commons pass Attachment Bill; States' anxieties on H.M.G.'s future policy	813
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 7	23	Royal Assent to Attachment Bill	828
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 15	29	Refers to No. 431; Viceroy's interview with Bhopal	844
		(April)		
467	Wavell to Amery Letter F. 681 (2)–GG/43	20	Refers to No. 265; conclusions on future policy towards States	901
		(May)		
490	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	1	Viceroy's visit to Sikkim	940
494	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	3	Jam Saheb's illness	947
504	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 16	9	Viceroy's visit to Sikkim	956
511	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–10	18	Relations with Hyderabad; future policy towards States	974
513	Amery to Wavell Letter	22	Agrees with conclusions in No. 467; suggests action which might help rationalise States' system	978
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	30	Future policy towards States	991

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June*)		
537	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2, 6	13	Reflections on futute rôle of States as seen by Moon in his *Strangers in India*	1024
		(*July*)		
585	Bhopal to Jenkins Letter	16	Encloses preliminary list of items for discussion between Wavell and States' delegation	1097
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 7	27	Position of Travancore and Cochin in Famine Enquiry; topics for discussion with Bhopal	1125
612	Note by Bhopal	31	Bhopal's remarks during interview with Wavell	1134
		(*August*)		
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	1	Viceroy's meeting with Bhopal	1139
618	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	1	Suggestion for removal of condition in G. of I. Act 1935 requiring minimum number of accessions from States before Federation can be inaugurated	1143
634	Wavell to Amery Letter F. 681/2/GG/43	9	Considers, and explains difficulties of, suggestions in No. 513	1169
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	9	States' future industrialisation	1171
639	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	10	Future of small States	1179
660	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	15	Refers to No. 618, paras. 5–7; position of States in constitutional reform	1199
670	Wavell to Amery Letter	23	Enclosure: Note by V. P. Menon dated 17 August 1944 commenting on No. 618, paras. 5–6	1213
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–7	31	Refers to Nos. 634 and 617; Wavell's meeting with States' deputation; States' view of their position *vis à vis* British India; States' industrialisation	1232

CHAPTER 7

Inflation; sterling balances; reconstruction

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June 1943*)		
13	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 9	19	Currency situation	14
18	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 4	22	Inflation and Silver	27
19	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 667	23	Asks for views on Vol. III, No. 276 as Cabinet are likely to give Wavell an indication of their views on social and economic policy	33

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*July*)		
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 7	5	Discussions with Princes on inflation during session of National Defence Council	51
32	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–3	9	Conversation with Strakosch on gold sales, possible release of American silver, and other deflationary measures	58
36	Memorandum by Jenkins	13	A Social and Economic Programme for India	66
41	Note by Amery	15	Comments on No. 36; suggests a system of Central government grants to Provinces and a national regeneration loan	80
47	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1502–S	16	Qualifications to views expressed in No. 48	85
48	Linlithgow to Amery Tel. 1515–S	16	Preliminary recommendations on social and economic policy	86
52	Linlithgow to Twynam Letter	18	Encloses No. 574 in Vol. III and two draft replies thereto; stresses difficulties in implementing social and economic reforms and requests assistance in framing a broader reply	98
53	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 13	19	Bevin's and Cripps' note on social and economic policy (Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 276)	103
60	Twynam to Linlithgow Letter 163–G.C.P.	26	Encloses Review of Notes on a Progressive Social and Industrial Policy in India in answer to No. 52	116
61	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 106th Conclusions Minute 2	27	War Financial Settlement of 1940 and Indian Sterling Balances	124
63	Amery to Kingsley Wood Letter	28	Argues against any action which might suggest repudiating War Financial Settlement	129
64	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 1–2	28	Cabinet discussion on Sterling Balances; possible ameliorating factors in their repayment	130
		(*August*)		
68	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 1–2	2	Refers to No. 32; inflation and silver situation	141
70	Linlithgow to Amery Letter	9	Refers to No. 64; Indian Sterling Balances	147
71	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions Minute 1	4	Decision to establish Committee on Indian Financial Questions	155
72	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 2–5, 9	5	Establishment of Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions; Amery's suggestions for curbing inflation; possibilities of social and economic progress	158
74	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 17601	7	Reports Cabinet decision as in No. 71	163
85	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 2–3	17	First meeting of Committee on Indian Financial Questions; Cherwell's contribution thereto	177

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 12, 15	21	Refers to No. 72; Amery's suggestions for curbing inflation; Bevin's and Cripps' ideas on social and economic policy	180
		(*September*)		
100	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 7, 11	6–7	Refers to Nos. 72 and 85; Cherwell; Amery's suggestions for curbing inflation	211
101	Memorandum by Amery	7	Some major problems for discussion	214
103	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 9	8	Further meeting of Committee on Indian Financial Questions	218
107	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 5	10	Raisman's comment on first meeting of Committee on Indian Financial Questions	225
113	Linlithgow to Amery Letter 23–H.E./43	14	Observations on 'A social and economic policy for India' (Enclosure to No. 276 in Vol. III); is unable to recommend instructions on these lines to Wavell	246
117	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 2–3	15	Measures to curb inflation	268
137	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 3–5	23	Measures to curb inflation; likely suggestions from Committee on Indian Financial Questions; U.S. attitude to silver sales	313
146	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 2	27	Refers to No. 117; measures to combat inflation	324
		(*October*)		
156	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 17–18	4	Review on his departure of (1) economic strains produced by S.E. Asia Command; (2) inflation situation	344
157	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, paras. 5–6, 13	1	Control of profiteering; Linlithgow's letter on social and economic policy (No. 113)	353
186	Amery to Cripps Letter	22	Refers to Vol. III, No. 643 and encloses copy of No. 113	406
		(*November*)		
198	Memorandum by Wavell	undated	Post-War Reconstruction	423
202	Amery to Anderson Letter	2	Indian accumulation of sterling balances similar to position in Middle East, E. and W. Africa and Dominions	444
205	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–5	3	Anti-inflationary measures; gold and silver supplies; Amery's attitude to Indian sterling balances	446
220	Anderson to Amery Letter	10	Agrees with view in No. 202 except that Indian position is distinguished by size of sterling balances and H.M.G.'s responsibility to assist in combating inflation	467
226	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	12	Difficulties of economic progress in Bengal	470
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	16	Refers to No. 205; economic strains on India	474
234	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	19	Wavell's memorandum on reconstruction (No. 198)	485

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*November*)		
237	Wavell to Amery Tel. 2562–S, para. 2	23	Informs him of main conclusions of Governors' Conference on post-war reconstruction	489
238	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5–6	23–4	Governors' discussions on inflation and post-war reconstruction	489
239	Bevin to Amery Letter	24	Thanks for No. 113; and suggests asking Wavell for views	498
240	Amery to Bevin Letter	24	Thanks for No. 239; hopes to let him and Cripps know soon how subject is moving	499
242	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	25	Measures to combat inflation	501
		(*December*)		
248	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 9	2	Measures to combat inflation	513
259	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 11	9	Refers to No. 234; Governors' discussions on reconstruction; Delhi Improvement Trust	531
260	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 8	9	Compulsory borrowing as anti-inflation measure	536
268	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 8	16	Measures to combat inflation	548
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 3	22	Metropolitan's criticism of Lottery loan	562
		1944		
		(*January*)		
298	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 8	5–6	Hill's ideas on post-war medical services and reconstruction; compulsory borrowing as anti-inflation measure	592
324	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4–6, 10	12	Appointment of full-time officials to prepare plans on aspects of reconstruction; proposed Reconstruction Member; Indian Science Congress; U.S.–U.K. committee to examine India's economic capacity	636
325	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	13	Colonial Office White Paper on mass education	641
334	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	19	Correspondence with Archbishop of Canterbury on Lottery Loan	654
336	Amery to Bevin Letter	21	Refers to No. 240 and encloses note on Post-War Reconstruction in India	658
337	Amery to Cripps Letter	21	Encloses Enclosure to No. 336; does not think it time to ask Wavell for full report	661
344	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	25	Tata Rs. 10,000 Crores Economic Plan	669
346	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–9	27	Suggested delegation of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S.; essentials of position as understood by Committee on Indian Financial Questions; suggested amendment of Defence Agreement with respect to Burma operations; purchase of defence equipment as means of reducing sterling balances	675

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*February*)		
370	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 11–12	10	Metropolitan's objections to lottery loan; suggested visit of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S.; Committee on Indian Financial Questions	711
371	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–6	10–11	Post-war international economic co-operation	717
381	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8–10	15	Comments on Hill's proposals for scientific research; visit of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S.	730
389	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	17	Visit of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S.	740
399	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	24–5	Sterling Balances as instrument of Empire unity	755
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	25	Discussions on post-war international economic policy	757
		(*March*)		
411	Note by Wavell	6	Interview with Birla on industrial and agricultural development and politics	779
419	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–6	9	Visits of Indian scientists and industrialists to U.K.	797
430	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 8	14	Visit of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S.; proposed Planning and Development Member	808
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4	16	Suggestion Raisman should visit U.S. to discuss silver and other questions; discussions of Inter-Imperial Official Committee on Post-War Economics	813
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4, 6, 9–10, 16	23	Raisman's memorandum on inflation; Inglis–Appleton Report on Indian railways; planning for post-war reconstruction; Hill's proposals for scientific development; Sargent's comments on Colonial Office report on mass education	828
439	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 8–10	24	Proposed Development Member; Coupland's suggestion of regional reconstruction commissions	833
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 9–12	29	Refers to No. 431; proposed Planning and Development Member; talk with Hill; future of broadcasting; international economic planning	844
448	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–6	29	Hill's proposals for scientific development; visits of Indian scientists and industrialists to U.K.; proposed Reconstruction Member	850
		(*April*)		
451	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 6–9	5	Refers to No. 438; conversation with Inglis; visit of Indian scientists to U.K.; Hill's proposals for scientific development; stimulating public interest in reconstruction planning	857

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*April*)		
454	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7–9	8	Post-war reconstruction and scientific development; visit of Indian industrialists to U.K.	865
458	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–5, 10	13	Conversation with Hill; growth of population; post-war international economic policy	875
465	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 11	18	Planning and development; compulsory borrowing	895
478	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	26	Improving conditions of seamen	925
482	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 5–6	27	Visit of Indian scientists to U.K.; conversation with Streat on Indian textile industry	933
		(*May*)		
509	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1010–S	12	Asks him to obtain Royal Approval for Dalal's appointment as Planning and Development Member; outlines Dalal's responsibilities	967
510	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	16	Dalal's appointment	968
511	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 4	18	Scheme for post-war training of Indian Medical Officers in U.K.	974
519	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	25	Dalal's appointment	988
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 12	30	Idea of Medical Centre as National War Memorial; publishing criticism of Bombay Plan	991
		(*June*)		
523	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1, PS.	2	Post-war planning; Queen Mary's wish to see Indian industrialist	996
527	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 1	6	Dalal's appointment	1002
535	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8–9	12	Refers to No. 523; Queen Mary's wish to see Indian industrialist; Amery's memorandum on Imperial Preference	1019
537	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 13	15	Hutton	1024
552	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 2	27	Agricultural reconstruction	1050
		(*July*)		
578	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4	13	Problem of Indian sterling balances	1087
587	Wavell to Amery Tel. 168–S.C.	18	Asks whether Churchill could be induced to make statement including reassurance on Indian sterling balances	1099
591	Amery to Wavell Tel. 621	19	Refers to No. 587; no prospect of Churchill making statement	1103
594	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–3	20	Churchill's and Amery's views on Indian sterling balances	1110
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4, 11	27	Refers to No. 578; Indian sterling balances; Dalal and Hutton	1125

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7–8, 12	1	Postponement of visits of Indian scientists and industrialists to U.K.; H.M.G.'s suspension of gold supply for anti-inflationary purposes; proposal for all-India Medical Centre	1139
618	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 9	2	Suggestion of establishing coal mining training centre in India	1143
629	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 102nd Conclusions Minute 2	4	Financial Questions	1162
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 3–4, 10, 16	9–10	Cabinet consideration of Indian sterling balances (No. 629) and Amery's views on them; States' future industrialisation; agricultural reconstruction	1171
638	Note by Wavell (extract)	10	Interview with Dalal on politics and economic planning	1178
670	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 16	23	Refers to No. 635; Indian sterling balances; reforming land tenure	1213
672	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 2	23	Strain of future operations on Indian economy	1224
674	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	28	Hill's visit to India	1228
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	31	States' industrialisation	1232

CHAPTER 8

External Relations

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June 1943*)		
4	Amery to Bracken Letter	16	Encloses draft publicity material on Wavell and his appointment	6
9	Halifax to Amery Tel. 2810 via Foreign Office	19	Washington is acting on publicity contained in No. 4; President's satisfaction	12
		(*July*)		
30	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 12, 16	5–6	Aney's appointment as Agent in Ceylon; Madame Chiang's journey across India	51
34	Jenkins to Laithwaite Letter	12	Encloses note of conversation between Wavell, Amery and Mudaliar covering status of Indian Agent-General in U.S. and exchange of High Commissioners between India and Canada and Australia	60
35	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 5	12	Indian representation at War Cabinet	63
		(*August*)		
68	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 9–10	2	Reactions to proposals (Enclosure to No. 34) regarding status of Indian Agent-General in U.S. and exchange of High Commissioners between India and Canada and Australia	141

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
70	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 19	10	Council discussion of Indian representation at War Cabinet	147
80	Mrs. Hendy to Raman Letter	undated	Phillips' remarks to a Harvard meeting	170
82	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 4–5	16	Visit by Maharaja of Nepal; proposals for retaliatory action against S. Africa	173
87	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 7, 9	20–1	Question of retaliatory action against S. Africa; conversation with Maharaja of Nepal	180
91	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, para. 11	30	Views of *Roy's Weekly* on Burma and Ceylon	190
		(*September*)		
103	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 10	8	Retaliatory action against S. Africa	218
129	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 10, 18	20	Retaliatory action against S. Africa; impression of Phillips derived from No. 80	295
133	War Cabinet W.M. (43) 130th Conclusions Minute 2	22	Meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers	306
134	Amery to Linlithgow Tel. 1025	23	Reports discussion as in No. 133 on position of Indian Representatives at meeting of Dominion P.Ms	308
137	Amery to Linlithgow Letter, para. 6	23	Cabinet discussion of Indian representation at Dominion P.Ms' meeting	313
		(*October*)		
156	Linlithgow to Amery Letter, paras. 4–5, 8–9	1–3	Refers to No. 137; retaliatory action against S. Africa; Indian representation at Dominion P.Ms' meeting; F.O. representative in India ruled out	344
183	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 6	21	Ministerial status for Bajpai	401
184	Amery to Wavell Tel. 24201	22	Informs him of Australian decision to appoint High Commissioner to India	405
189	G. of I., Commerce Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 9187	27	Repeats tel. welcoming appointment of Australian High Commissioner	410
		(*November*)		
206	Amery to Wavell Tel. 1190	4	Informs him of postponement of Dominion P.Ms' meeting and doubts immediate need to send Indian representatives to War Cabinet	448
213	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 11	8	Elevation of Bajpai's status	455
230	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 14	16	Retaliatory action against S. Africa	474
238	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 10	24	Retaliatory action against S. Africa; Enclosure: letter from Wavell to Smuts seeking help in opening negotiations	489
241	S. of S. to G. of I., External Affairs Dept. Tel. 27086	25	Asks for re-examination of suggestion that Indian Agency-General in Washington be elevated to ministerial status and for arguments in support	499

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*November*)		
242	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–3, 13, 16–17	25	Prior information for Viceroy on Summit conferences; likely results of Cairo and Teheran Conferences; India unrepresented at Middle East discussions; proposed elevation of Bajpai; retaliatory action against S. Africa	501
243	Turnbull to Jenkins Letter	26	Refers to No. 206; Dominion P.Ms' meeting likely late April 1944; suggests Indian representatives arrive late March/early April	505
		(*December*)		
248	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1, 6–7	2	Results of Cairo Conference; P.Qs on S. African pegging legislation	513
250	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 9	3	The Chiang Kai-sheks' return through India	518
259	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 13	9	The Chiang Kai-sheks' journeys through India	531
260	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 6	9	The Chiang Kai-sheks' return through India	536
263	Amery to Churchill Tel. Grand 555 Nocop via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa	10	Feels Curtin should be informed of Casey's appointment as Governor of Bengal before Royal Approval and submits draft for this purpose	540
266	Churchill's Private Office to Martin Tel. Grand 607 via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa	15	Repeats Curtin's thanks for tel. on Casey's appointment	544
268	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	16	Refers to No. 238; status of Indians in S. Africa	548
278	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 4–5	22	Refers to Nos. 242 and 248; the Chiang Kai-sheks' journeys across India; elevation of Bajpai's status; Shafa'at's suitability in S. Africa	562
285	G. of I., External Affairs Dept. to S. of S. Express Letter 875/S	24	Refers to No. 241 and states case for elevation of status of Indian Agency-General in Washington	574
287	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	29	American interest in India's stability	577
		1944		
		(*January*)		
296	Wavell to Amery Tel. 27–S	4	Discusses arrangements for arrival of Indian representatives to War Cabinet, their likely length of stay, and selection of States' representative	591
298	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 10	5–6	No reply yet to his letter to Smuts (Enclosure to No. 238)	592
318	Amery to Wavell Tel. 816	11	Replies to questions asked in No. 296	627
332	Amery to Churchill Minute P. 1/44	18	Refers to No. 133; informs him of arrangements for arrival of Indian representatives and Noon's appointment	648

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*January*)		
333	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 14	18	Exchange of High Commissioners with Australia	648
341	S. of S. to G. of I., External Affairs Dept. Tel. 2000	25	Agrees generally with No. 285 but asks for draft of instructions to Bajpai	666
342	Amery to Wavell Tel. 2091	25	Informs him of Attlee's announcement to Commons on Dominion P.Ms' meeting and suggests he takes line that meeting is not full Imperial Conference	667
346	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 12	27	Request that Chiang Kai-sheks inform Viceroy prior to journeys across India	675
348	Halifax to Amery Letter (extract)	29	Supports proposal to raise Agent-General's status	685
		(*February*)		
352	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8, 12	1	Indian High Commissioner in Australia; the Chiang Kai-sheks' explanation of journey across India	690
361	Wavell to Amery Tel. 263–S	8	Recommends Kashmir, or failing him Bhopal, as States' representative at War Cabinet	703
362	Amery to Wavell Tel. 128	8	Likely subjects at Dominion P.Ms' meeting and briefing Noon should receive	704
368	Amery to Wavell Tel. 138	10	Agrees to proposals in No. 361 if internal situation in Kashmir will permit of Maharaja's absence	710
370	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 9, 14	10	Delay in appointment of Indian High Commissioner to Australia; Indians in S. Africa; liaison with Mountbatten on the Chiang Kai-sheks' movements	711
371	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4–6	10–11	The Chiang Kai-sheks' explanation of journeys across India; post-war international economic co-operation	717
381	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 9	15	Leakage to press of his letter to Smuts (Enclosure to No. 238)	730
385	Wavell to Amery Tel. 336–S	17	Refers to No. 368; appointment of Kashmir P.M. makes Maharaja's absence possible	737
401	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	25	Discussions on post-war international economic policy	757
		(*March*)		
414	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	7	Kashmir's acceptance of War Cabinet post; appropriate Dept. for relations with Australian High Commissioner	784
420	G. of I., Commerce Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 2690	10	Would welcome appointment of Canadian High Commissioner in India	799
421	Amery to Wavell Tel. 237	10	Refers to No. 362; informs him of suggested agenda for Dominion P.Ms' Conference; and discusses items to which Indian representatives are likely to be invited	799

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*March*)		
424	S. of S. to G. of I., External Affairs Dept. Tel. 6020	11	Refers to No. 285; considers accreditation of Indian Minister at Washington, his responsibilities and terms of directive to him	802
427	Wavell to Amery Tel. 536–S	12	Refers to No. 421; has warned Indian representatives they will not attend all meetings	806
430	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 4, 6–7	14	Briefing of Indian representatives at War Cabinet; offer of High Commissionership in Australia to Shanmukham Chetty; appropriate department for common-wealth relations	808
431	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 8, 11	16	Discussions of Inter-Imperial Official Committee on Post-War Economics; suggestion for re-naming Indians Overseas Dept.; difficulties of removing restriction on Indian immigration to U.S.	813
438	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 8, 11, 15	23	Unable to brief Kashmir for London meetings; re-naming of Indians Overseas Dept.	828
442	Amery to Wavell Tel. 284	26	Asks for statement of his views on military aspects of post-war settlement and post-war imperial defence policy in time for Dominion P.Ms' Conference	838
447	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6–8, 12	29	Refers to No. 431; aspects of exchange of High Commissioners with Australia; Indians in S. and E. Africa and Ceylon; possible removal of restrictions on Indian immigration to U.S.; international economic planning	844
449	Cranborne to MacDonald Tel. 39 Saving	30	Asks him to inform Canadian Govt. that G. of I. would welcome appointment of Canadian High Commissioner	852
		(*April*)		
451	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 10	5	Exchange of High Commissioners with Australia	857
454	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5–6, 10	8	Council discussion on retaliatory action against S. Africa; character of Shafa'at's High Commissionership in S. Africa; re-organisation of Indian Institute of International Affairs	865
457	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 4	12	Retaliatory action against S. Africa	874
458	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–3, 10	13	Arrival of Noon and Kashmir; post-war international economic policy	875
465	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6–7	18	Exchange of High Commissioners with Australia; agreement with S. Africa for suspension of pegging legislation in Natal	895
475	War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 221	24	Joint Memorandum by Amery and Eden on Indian Minister at Washington	915

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*April*)		
478	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 5	26	Agreement with S. Africa on pegging legislation	925
482	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	27	S. Africa question	933
		(*May*)		
494	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 1–3	3	Opening of Dominion P.Ms' Conference; Kashmir's and Noon's speeches to Empire Parliamentary Association; conversation with Mackenzie King on exchange of High Commissioners with India	947
504	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 7–8	9	Further S. African difficulties; Bajpai's status	956
508	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–4, 12	11	Noon's speeches; deliberations of Dominion P.Ms' Conference on economic matters, intra-Commonwealth co-operation and international organisation; talk with Smuts on discrimination against Indians in S. Africa	964
510	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 11–13, 15	16	Exchange of High Commissioners with Australia; Indians in Ceylon, S. Africa, and Canada; Madame Chiang Kai-shek's proposed visit to India; Kashmir and Noon	968
511	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 1	18	Work of Dominion P.Ms' Conference	974
514	Bridges to Monteath Letter	23	Future arrangements for Indian representation at War Cabinet	981
515	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 3, 14	23	Dominion P.Ms' Conference; Indian High Commissioner in Australia; Indians in S. Africa	982
518	Amery to Wavell Tel. 470	25	Arrangements for return of Kashmir and Noon; future Indian representation at War Cabinet	987
519	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2, 4	25	Paranjpye's appointment as Indian High Commissioner in Australia; elevation of Bajpai's status	988
521	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 18	30	Future Indian representation at War Cabinet; Noon's activities in London; Paranjpye's appointment	991
		(*June*)		
523	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 2–3, 10–11	2	Noon and Kashmir; Indians in Canada; Indian Ocean defence	996
527	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 4, 10	6	Refers to No. 519; Paranjpye's appointment; elevation of Bajpai's status; implementation of Pretoria agreement on pegging legislation	1002
532	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 74th Conclusions Minute 2	9	Indian Minister at Washington	1014
533	Monteath to Bridges Letter	10	Refers to No. 514; likely length of Indian representatives' stay in London	1018

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*June*)		
535	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 1, 6, 9	12	Refers to No. 523; Noon; Indians in Canada and S. Africa; Paranjpye's appointment; Amery's memorandum on Imperial Preference	1019
536	Bridges to Monteath Letter	13	Action on No. 533	1023
537	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 8	13	Cabinet consideration of elevation of Bajpai's status (No. 532)	1024
552	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 13	27	Elevation of Bajpai's status; High Commissionership in S. Africa	1050
		(*July*)		
565	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 14	4	Ceylon constitution	1063
568	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 4, 9	6	Elevation of Bajpai's status; return of Kashmir	1070
572	Wavell to Amery Letter	10	Is astonished Dominion P.Ms' meeting practically ignored India	1075
574	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 2, 8	11	Drew Pearson's allegation that G. of I. withheld letter from Roosevelt to Gandhi; appointment of Indian Agent-General in Burma	1076
593	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 6, 12	19	Australian wish for agreement with India on economic and defence questions; Kashmir's return	1105
594	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 7	20	Noon's broadcast	1110
601	Amery to Wavell Tel. 16562	26	Bajpai is being kept in touch with Washington discussions on future world organisation	1119
602	Campbell to Eden Tel. 4023	26	Refers to No. 603; informs him of interview with Hull on Drew Pearson's article in *Washington Post*	1120
603	Campbell to Eden Tel. 4024	26	Refers to No. 602; text of Drew Pearson's article	1121
606	Wavell to Amery Letter F. 430/2/GG/43	27	Presumes India's right to representation at a Peace Conference is fully recognised	1124
607	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 9	27	Indian traders in Ceylon and rubber tappers for Ceylon	1125
610	Winant to Eden Letter	29	Apologises for publication of Phillips' letter to Roosevelt	1133
611	Wavell to Amery Tel. 1481-S	31	Refers to No. 601; feels question of India's status in future world organisation should be taken up at once	1133
		(*August*)		
617	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 6	1	Operation of inward censorship and its bearing on Drew Pearson's article	1139
618	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 10–11	3	Refers to No. 593; proposal for Australian-Indian agreement on economic and defence questions; Khare's demand for parliamentary legislation to allow franchise reprisals	1143

	Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
		(*August*)		
621	Amery to Eden Letter	2	Encloses Nos. 611 and 601; asks for note on India's position in future world organisation to be included in instructions to British delegation in Washington	1151
623	War Cabinet W.M. (44) 100th Conclusions Minute 2	3	Indian Minister at Washington	1154
633	Campbell to Eden Tel. 4259	8	Likely adverse effect in U.S. of draft reply to Gandhi in No. 632 could be mitigated by reference to H.M.G.'s adherence to Cripps offer	1168
635	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 5	9	Cabinet consideration of Bajpai's status (No. 623)	1171
645	Eden to Amery Letter	11	Refers to Nos. 621 and 611; India's eligibility for membership of world organisation is not in doubt	1187
660	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 11	15	Cabinet decision on Bajpai's status	1199
661	G. of I., External Affairs Dept. to S. of S. Tel. 10729	16	Feels strongly Embassy should be supported in taking Drew Pearson affair further with State Department; Phillips still Roosevelt's Personal Representative to India but his views make it impossible to receive him again	1203
664	Amery to Wavell Letter, para. 12	17	Phillips	1205
665	Minute by Casey	17	Part concern for good Anglo-American relations should play in determining future constitutional policy	1208
670	Wavell to Amery Letter, paras. 5, 9	23	Refers to No. 635; Cabinet consideration of Bajpai's status; Anglo-American relations in India and Phillips	1213
674	Wavell to Amery Letter, para. 7	28	Employment of Indians in diplomatic posts abroad	1228
675	Eden to Halifax Tel. 7719	30	Instructs him to ask U.S. authorities to make public statement on Drew Pearson's allegations	1231
676	Amery to Wavell Letter, paras. 10, 13	31	Refers to No. 660; Chandler's Senate speech; Cabinet consideration of Bajpai's status	1232

APPENDIX

A. Reconsideration of the Channels of Communication between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, August–November 1943

Name and number	*Date*	*Main subject or subjects*	*Page*
	1943		
Note by Turnbull	*undated*	Existing channels of communication and a suggested simplified scheme	1236
Jenkins to Secretaries to G. of I. and Secretary Pol. Dept. Letter 609–G.G.–43	*Nov. 11*	Outlines new telegraphic arrangements	1240

B. Examination of the Practice of Viceroys, Secretaries of State and Governors taking away their Private Correspondence when leaving Office, January–August 1944

	1944		
Amery to Wavell Letter	*June 20*	Refers to No. 310; considers that, providing necessary precedents are left on record and security of papers is not endangered, there is no reason for altering present practice; feels they should not abuse private channel	1242
Wavell to Amery Letter F. 744/GG/43	*July 8*	Agrees with Amery's conclusions	1245
Addendum to Section B	1945		
Laithwaite to Turnbull Minute	*Oct. 31*	Note on papers Linlithgow took away	1245

I

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/9a: f 78

INDIA OFFICE, *15 June 1943*

My dear Winston,

Wavell was staying with us over most of the week-end and I had several good talks with him. Though naturally I did not let on what was in the wind, it was easy enough to digress from time to time from military to political subjects and I found his talk shrewd and sensible. This morning I had a short talk with him and was very pleased with the serious spirit in which he is facing what he knows is a tremendous responsibility. I should have been a little disquieted if he had looked on this new task as something he could take in his stride. One thing we can be sure of, and that is that he won't lose his head if things get difficult.

I hope you will recommend him for a Viscountcy, not merely for the good start that would help to give him in India, but even more for his past service. To have saved the Middle East with enemies four to one against him,[1] and at a time when its loss might have involved the loss of everything else, is something well worthy of the highest recognition.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

[1] Field Marshal Wavell had been C.-in-C. Middle East 1939–41.

2

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 85th Conclusions, Minute 6. Confidential Annex

L/PO/8/9a: ff 31, 33–4

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 15 June 1943 at 5 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison

Also present during discussion of item 6 were: Mr H. V. Evatt, Mr S. M. Bruce, Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, Sir Kingsley Wood, Mr Amery, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr Brendan Bracken, Sir Alexander Cadogan, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, General Sir Alan Brooke

INDIA

The Viceroyalty and System of Command

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he wished to discuss with his colleagues the succession to the Viceroyalty and also certain changes in the system of Command in India.

He had reached the conclusion that a change in the system of Command was called for in order to ensure vigorous and effective prosecution of the operations against Japan. The United States had great interests in this area from the point of view of sending supplies to China by air. He had decided that the Command of operations in South East Asia should be separated from the statutory office of Commander-in-Chief in India. This division between the operational Command and the control exercised by the statutory Commander-in-Chief in India had been recommended by the Committee of Imperial Defence in 1929[1] in the event of a major campaign having to be conducted with India as its base of operations.

As regards the Command in South East Asia, there were two models which might be followed—the model of the Middle East Command, where there were three co-equal Commanders-in-Chief, and what might be called the North African model, namely, a Supreme Commander-in-Chief, having under him a Naval, an Army and an Air Commander. He thought that for South East Asia the latter was the right form of organisation.

Turning to the Viceroyalty, the Prime Minister said that, as his colleagues would be aware, the question of a successor to Lord Linlithgow had been under almost continuous consideration for about six months. From many points of view it would have been desirable that a Member of the War Cabinet who was familiar with the Cabinet's policy should have been appointed to this post. But he had come to the conclusion that it would be a great pity to make changes now in the War Cabinet. After much consideration he had recommended to His Majesty, who had been pleased to approve, the appointment as Viceroy of Sir Archibald Wavell. Sir Archibald had a great record of solid achievement behind him. He was a man of wide views, and had served for eighteen months on the Viceroy's Council. Since he had made this recommendation to His Majesty, he had been interested to find out that Sir Archibald Wavell had expressed the opinion that not enough had been done for social reform in India and that he would be in the fullest sympathy with striking this note.

There was the further consideration, that our first duty at the present time was to defend India, and that political reforms must wait until the military situation in the Far East had improved.

It was proposed to offer Sir Archibald Wavell the appointment of Viceroy for a period of three years.

As his successor as statutory Commander-in-Chief, he proposed the re-appointment of Sir Claude Auchinleck. He was sure that there was no-one who had better qualifications for the Command of the Indian Army, by whom he was held in the greatest respect.

The Prime Minister said that he hoped it might be possible to make an announcement towards the end of the week of the appointments of Sir Archibald Wavell and Sir Claude Auchinleck, and, in principle, of the setting up of the South East Asia Command, although the details of the organisation of this Command would not be completed for some time.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that he agreed that the functions of Commander-in-Chief, India, and of the Commander-in-Chief of South East Asia should now be divided. It was essential that the statutory Commander-in-Chief should spend much of his time in exercising influence on his colleagues on the Executive Council and in the work of organisation, training, inspection and consolidation of the greatly expanded Indian Army. In his view, General Auchinleck was ideally suited for the post.

He also favoured the appointment of a single Supreme Allied Commander for the South East Asia front. At the present moment difficulties were arising because of the number of United States organisations which required to be fitted into a regular framework. Thus, General Stilwell was on occasion consulted by the U.S. Government as to the extent to which demands for the Indian front should be met.

Sir Archibald Wavell was a man of wide outlook, who had had considerable contact with political affairs in the Middle East and had proved himself a valuable member of the Viceroy's Council. It was also relevant that, at the present time, public opinion in India did not expect very much in the way of reforms in the political sphere. On the whole,[2] he thought that General Wavell would be able to lead and control the Executive Council and to keep India's mind on the war. These were the two most important qualities required of a Viceroy appointed at the present time.

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE thought that it would be a great pity if the appointment of the new Viceroy was made on the basis that he was a "safe" man and that no progress was to be made during the next three years. He thought that there was not enough economic advice at the Viceroy's disposal, and that the present was a first-rate opportunity for turning the minds of the people of India from political agitation towards economic progress. Further, consideration should be given to India's place in the scheme of defence of the British Commonwealth. For this purpose he thought that India might form part of some larger defence grouping.

[1] See L/WS/1/1274: ff 249–58.

[2] Mr Amery crossed through the words 'On the whole'.

Generally, the Minister of Labour and National Service was anxious to see India taking a more prominent position in the Eastern world.

The Minister of Labour also stressed the importance of the new Viceroy not maintaining the somewhat isolated position of the present Viceroy.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION stressed the point that Sir Archibald Wavell should not be regarded as a stopgap. It was an advantage that he would regard his task mainly as a non-political one, and it was important that he should have good advice on the economic side of his duties.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that a number of difficult issues would arise which would involve, for example, conflicts over priorities in connection with administration which would arise between the Supreme Commander and the Indian authorities. These would have to be settled as they arose, on the authority of the Viceroy, acting on behalf of His Majesty's Government. The Viceroy would have under him for this purpose a Senior Administrative Officer with a small Handling Section to settle, on his behalf, the day to day problems.

The War Cabinet:—

(1) Took note, with approval, of the proposed separation of the Command of Operations in South East Asia from the Office of Commander-in-Chief, India, and of the proposed appointments to the Viceroyalty and to the office of Commander-in-Chief in India.

(2) Asked the Secretary of State for India, the Minister of Aircraft Production and the Minister of Information to prepare a draft statement, which should be submitted to the Prime Minister, for use by the Press when these two new appointments and the setting up of the new Command were announced.

(3) Approved the suggestion that the principal newspaper proprietors should be seen before the appointments were announced.

(4) Took note that the Prime Minister proposed to telegraph to the King as to the proposal to re-appoint General Sir Claude Auchinleck as Commander-in-Chief in India; and also to General Auchinleck, as soon as General Sir Archibald Wavell had definitely accepted the post of Viceroy.[3]

[3] An additional Conclusion (5) was later added. See No. 10, note 2.

3

Mr Churchill to General Auchinleck (via India Office and Viceroy)

Telegram, L/PO/10/34: f 150

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *16 June 1943*

16–U. Following for General Auchinleck from Prime Minister. Personal and Most Secret.

1. His Majesty has approved the appointment of Field Marshal Wavell to be Viceroy of India in succession to Lord Linlithgow. I now have great pleasure in offering you the post of Commander-in-Chief in India which you gave up to undertake the Command of the Middle East in 1941. The problems of an Indian Army expanded tenfold since the war require the utmost care and vigilance and everyone I have consulted agrees that there is no one comparable to you in experience and knowledge of that Army. I trust therefore that you will find yourself able to undertake this most important Command. The duration of the appointment would be for the normal five years inclusive of the period for which you have already held it.

2. It was always contemplated by the Committee of Imperial Defence that if a major campaign had to be conducted with India as its principal base, the Commander-in-Chief in India should be relieved of the operational burden of conducting it. In agreement with the Chiefs of Staff and the War Cabinet I have reached the conclusion that this is the best arrangement, and I propose, if the President agrees, to set up a new inter-Allied Command of the East Asia front, i.e. of the operations against Japan from India's frontiers eastwards, under a supreme Commander who will be independent of, and co-equal with, the Commander-in-Chief in India. It will be the duty of the Commander-in-Chief in India, besides discharging his full statutory duties in accordance with precedent, to aid and sustain the operations of the Supreme Commander of the East Asia front by every means in his power. I do not need to go into further details at the present moment but a precise definition of responsibilities will of course be furnished you in the immediate future.

3. As Field Marshal Wavell will not be returning to India until he comes out as Viceroy at the end of September,[1] it will be necessary that you should take up your appointment as Commander-in-Chief in India without the slightest delay and that you should forthwith exercise all the functions now discharged

[1] In his telegram 15–U of 18 June, Sir G. Laithwaite asked whether 'the end of September' was a slip as it had been announced that Lord Linlithgow's appointment would expire on 18 October. In telegram 643 of 18 June, Mr Turnbull replied that it could be assumed Mr Churchill was referring to the date of Field Marshal Wavell's departure from the U.K. L/PO/8/9a.

by Field Marshal Wavell pending the setting up of the new Command of the East Asia front which I hope may be achieved in the next fortnight.

4. I should be grateful for an immediate reply as I wish to make the announcement of the new Viceroy, of the new Commander-in-Chief in India and in principle of the new Supreme Commander of the East Asia front at the end of the week.[2]

[2] In his telegram 14-U of 18 June to Mr Churchill, General Auchinleck accepted the position as C.-in-C. India, 'with full knowledge of heavy responsibilities involved'. He suggested he took up his duties on 20 June at 12 noon. L/PO/8/94: f 41.

4

Mr Amery to Mr Bracken[1]

L/PO/8/9a: ff 61–5

MOST SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *16 June 1943*

My dear Brendan,

I enclose a draft of what I have prepared for the Press about Wavell and shall be very glad of any comments or suggestions you may care to make. I think that this material should be used by you and myself orally when we see the Press and not be sent out in written form.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

Enclosure 1 to No. 4

SECRET *16 June 1943*

I suggest that in talking to editors and press correspondents, what is said in the attached note about Field Marshal Wavell personally should be fitted into a broader background covering such points as follows:—

(i) That never in the history of our relationship with India has the responsibility falling upon a Viceroy been greater than that which will be the lot of the new incumbent.

(ii) That this is a moment in the destiny of the United Nations and of India herself when quite exceptional qualities are called for in a new Viceroy, and in Field Marshal Wavell there is the ideal combination of outstanding organisational and administrative ability and resoluteness of spirit and capacity for leadership. His war record demonstrates that we have in him one who has fully grasped the wider implications of total war.

(iii) Our whole policy in India depends upon the successful prosecution of the war. That is the first consideration in the mind both of H.M. Government and of the Government of India. Only by the complete removal of the Japanese menace will the way be cleared for the fulfilment of India's political aspirations.

(iv) As the result of the discussions in Washington between President Roosevelt and the Prime Minister, plans have been laid for the liberation of occupied territories in the Far East, the freeing of China, and the complete removal of any further threat of Japanese aggression against India itself.

(v) The success of the strategy of the United Nations in the Far East depends upon the maintenance of India as a vital supply base, upon the mobilisation of all her resources, and upon the intensive development of her war effort. India is, in fact, the arsenal of the East and the life-line of China.

(vi) Field Marshal Wavell, as Commander-in-Chief and a member of Lord Linlithgow's Executive Council, has been fully associated with the constitutional policy of the British Government. The Government are anxious that it should be clearly understood that the appointment of this outstanding military administrator as Viceroy implies no change whatsoever in their policy on the constitutional issue or their earnest desire to promote that agreement which will enable India to frame her own constitution and take her place as a fully self-governing unit of the Commonwealth as soon as possible after the conclusion of the war.

(vii) In undertaking this great task the Field Marshal will be fortified by the co-operation of a strong and representative Council in which Indians are in the great majority. It will be his hope, as indeed that of H.M. Government, that this vital era will be marked by an ever-quickening spirit of co-operation throughout India.[2]

L. S. A.

Enclosure 2 to No. 4

To the outside public the appointment of Field Marshal Sir Archibald Wavell to be Viceroy of India may come as somewhat of a surprise. They know him as the consummate strategist who, surrounded by overwhelming enemy armies in the Middle East, first kept them at arms' length by sheer bluff and then, hitting out first in one direction, then in another, successively

[1] Mr Amery sent a similar letter to Sir Stafford Cripps.

[2] This note was transmitted, with unimportant differences, to Washington in Foreign Office telegram 4013 of 17 June and to New Delhi in telegram 644 of 18 June, except that in the telegram to Washington 'the final assault against Japan' was included among the preparations resulting from the discussions mentioned in para. (iv).

The telegram to New Delhi stated that similar guidance had been telegraphed to Washington, U.K. High Commissioners and Colonial Governors. L/PO/8/9a and L/I/1/1544.

annihilated them. They know what his victories meant to the whole course of the war; how they saved, not only Syria, Iraq and Persia, but helped to save Moscow as well, for without them nothing could have prevented the whole combined weight of the enemy forces being hurled against Russia at an earlier date. They have heard less of the profound student of the history of war, though his lectures on the art of generalship[3] and his Life of Lord Allenby[4] have won the keen appreciation of those best qualified to judge. Still less have they perhaps realised how much of practical judgment of political as well as of administrative and economic issues was necessarily involved in dealing with all the governments on or over whose territories he was operating or with the varying elements of which his armies were composed. Similarly few outside the inner circle of the Indian administration are aware of the extent to which the Commander-in-Chief in India—the post which he has held for the greater part of two years—is, in effect, not merely a military commander but India's Secretary of State for War and a regular member of the Viceroy's Council for all purposes of Indian government.

Our greatest soldiers have, indeed, been men who have combined political and administrative with purely military ability. Not to speak of Marlborough and Wellington in former days men like Lord Kitchener and Lord Allenby were successful High Commissioners in Egypt and combined a keen interest in the welfare of the Egyptian peasantry with a genuine sympathy for Egypt's national aspirations. In Sir Archibald Wavell as Viceroy India will discover much more than a great soldier with a world wide reputation. She will learn to appreciate a man of liberal outlook, keenly interested in her social and industrial problems, and of wide literary and intellectual sympathies.[5]

[3] *Generals and Generalship. The Lees Knowles Lectures delivered at Trinity College, Cambridge in 1939* (Times Publishing Co., London, 1941).

[4] *Allenby. A Study in Greatness* (Harrap and Co., London, 1940).

[5] Mr Amery transmitted this note to Lord Halifax in Foreign Office telegram 4014 of 17 June with the addition, after 'national aspirations' in the second para., of the following sentence: 'America need hardly be reminded of Washington, Jackson, Harrison and Grant as examples of military leaders who were found fit for the highest position in the State'. L/PO/8/9a.

5

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *16 June 1943*

2. I am sorry you are having such an anxious time over food. One can only hope that the efforts of your own Government combined with what assistance

the Centre can give may tide us over an unpleasant crisis. I understand that Christie has been in Calcutta recently and that he came away with a feeling of very cautious optimism which perhaps you may not yet entirely share. You put the case for complete free trade very clearly and strongly in your two telegrams[1] and I hope that Food Department's telegram of June the 7th[2] addressed to the Orissa, Bihar, Assam and Bengal Governments reminding them of the current direction under Section 126-A of the Government of India Act may have been welcome to you. The new policy which the Food Department had proposed to introduce from June the 16th involving an extension of free trade has proved to require further examination, since certain fresh points of substantial importance have been raised, and its enforcement has had to be postponed for the moment, as your Government will have heard separately. Meanwhile I wish you all possible luck with your drive to discover stocks of foodgrains in your own Province and I am glad to hear that the Finance Department have given you 4 crores of rupees to assist you in forming your rice pool.

[1] Not printed; but see Vol. III, No. 766. [2] Not printed in Vol. III.

6

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, DARJEELING, *16 June 1943*

Dear Linlithgow,

I should welcome your advice upon a question which not only raises general principles of constitutional propriety but may (though I hope it will not) be of the utmost practical importance in Bengal in the not distant future.

2. Stated in general terms, the question is—Can a Governor when seeking to secure a Ministry in accordance with paragraph VII of his Instrument of Instructions,[1] abstain from taking into consultation (or, in other words, approaching as a potential Chief Minister) the person most likely to command

[1] Paragraph VII of the *Instrument of Instructions to Governors (1936)* read: 'In making appointments to his Council of Ministers Our Governor shall use his best endeavours to select his Ministers in the following manner, that is to say, to appoint in consultation with the person who in his judgment is most likely to command a stable majority in the Legislature those persons (including so far as practicable members of important minority communities) who will best be in a position collectively to command the confidence of the Legislature. In so acting, he shall bear constantly in mind the need for fostering a sense of joint responsibility among his Ministers.' *Parl. Papers*, H. of C. paper No. 1, vol. xx, 1936–7, pp. 1031–8.

a stable majority in the Legislature if that person does not "enjoy the Governor's confidence"? The words in inverted commas have a certain currency, though I find no authority for them in the Constitution Act or the Instrument of Instructions. Indeed, paragraph VII of the Instrument explicitly uses only the phrase "to command the confidence of the Legislature". Section 51 (1) of the Act provides that Ministers shall hold office during the Governor's pleasure, and popular expressions such as "enjoying the Governor's confidence" would appear to have reference to the phraseology of that section.

3. Another way of stating the question would be—Do grounds which would justify a Governor in dismissing a Minister (or Chief Minister) constitute justification for the Governor refusing to consider the person in question as a potential Chief Minister although he commands a stable majority in the Legislature?

4. To put it in a concrete form—Having regard to the reasons which justified Dow's dismissal of Allah Bux[2] would Dow have been justified in refusing to ask Allah Bux to form a Ministry had the question arisen and Allah Bux commanded a stable majority? It does seem arguable that if the Governor knows in advance that a person, if appointed Minister, will deserve dismissal he should abstain from appointing that person Minister, let alone Chief Minister.

5. The answer, at any rate during the war, will not (as I see it) be dictated wholly by constitutional considerations. You will recollect that you made it very clear to me that any Ministry designed to replace our recent Section 93 régime must be pledged to support the war effort. I also understand that Reid remained on for some time in Section 93 although there was a stable Ministry offering, because it was not pledged to the war effort. It would seem therefore that practical, as well as purely constitutional, considerations must be weighed in answering my question.

6. The practical application of the answer in which I am interested would, of course, be to the event of the fall of Nazimuddin's Ministry. As I indicated recently in connection with his request for permission to visit Sarat Bose, I do not wish you to think that that is at all likely; but, as you yourself suggested in the same connection, it is a possibility to which in certain circumstances we must face up. In short, would I be justified in such an event in refusing to call on Huq (or Mookerjee) to form a Ministry, on the ground of his combined record in, and after vacating office?

[2] See Vol. III, No. 62, para. 16; No. 69, para. 4; and No. 86, para. 21.

7

Mr Churchill to Field Marshal Wavell

L/PO/8/9a: f 43

10 DOWNING STREET, *17 June 1943*

My dear Wavell,
I am very glad indeed to learn that you will undertake this great task. I am sure that His Majesty's choice will be acclaimed, and that his affairs will not suffer in your hands. All my colleagues share my confidence.

I have submitted your name to The King for a Viscounty, and have little doubt that this will be granted.

I propose to make announcement in Saturday morning's papers, together with that affecting General Auchinleck, provided his acceptance is received in time.

With every good wish, believe me,
Yours very sincerely,
WINSTON S. CHURCHILL

8

Mr Stephenson to Sir G. Laithwaite

MSS. EUR. F. 125/106

No. M.–25. CAMP, *18 June 1943*

My dear Laithwaite,
I write in continuation of my letter dated 29th May 1943 to Abell.[1] As you have probably seen from the papers, His Excellency has eventually decided to release Mrs. Gandhi and Mrs. Pandit unconditionally. This decision in effect meant Mrs. Pandit's release from jail and the non-rearrest of Mrs. Gandhi who, as already reported, was in the Kamla Nehru Hospital.

Yours sincerely,
H. S. STEPHENSON

[1] Vol. III, No. 745.

9

Viscount Halifax to Mr Amery (via Foreign Office)

Telegram, L/PO/8/9a: f 16

WASHINGTON, *19 June 1943, 2.37 am*
Received: 19 June 1943, 8.25 am

No. 2810. Your telegrams Nos. 4013 and 4014.[1]
Personal for Secretary of State for India.
Bajpai informed Mr Butler will handle on lines suggested.

2. I also told the President in case he had not received direct message already. He professed great satisfaction.[2]

[1] See No. 4, notes 2 and 5. [2] Mr Amery minuted 'Has P.M. been informed?'.

10

Mr Turnbull to Sir E. Bridges

L/PO/8/9a: f 30

MOST SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *19 June 1943*

Dear Bridges,

Mr. Amery feels that the War Cabinet Conclusions W.M. (43) 85, Minute 6, Confidential Annex,[1] should be amended by the addition on page 3 of a paragraph to be inserted after the report of the Minister of Aircraft Production's remarks. This paragraph should, he thinks, be to the following effect:

> "It was agreed that there should be no statement as to Sir Archibald Wavell's tenure being for three years. There was no statutory term of office for the Viceroy and Sir A. Wavell had only been given the indication that the appointment might be only for three years in order to leave the Government free to ask for his resignation without any sense of disappointment on his part if the circumstances made it desirable."

You may feel that an addition of this sort would more properly be inserted in the conclusions at the end of the Minute and if so I think that Mr. Amery would certainly agree.

I have sent a copy of this letter to Martin at No. 10.[2]

Yours sincerely,

F. F. TURNBULL

[1] No. 2.

[2] Sir E. Bridges replied in a letter of 21 June referring to No. 14 and agreeing that Mr Amery's proposed paragraph should be added as a further Conclusion to Minute 6. L/PO/8/9a: f 21.

11

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/9a: f 28

INDIA OFFICE, *19 June 1943*

My dear Winston,

The press reception of Wavell's appointment (and Auchinleck's as well) has been excellent, thanks largely to Brendan's activity in seeing leading Editors and making them understand the true meaning of your decision. It may also interest you to know that Mudaliar was delighted and at once assured me that Wavell could count on his hundred per cent. loyal support. He tells me that Wavell is popular with all the Council and with a great many Indians outside, and that his gift of clear statement has been the one thing which has drawn leading Indians to the two-monthly meetings of the National Defence Council and sent them back enthusiastic.

The more I think of it, the more I believe that we have picked a winner.

I see Linlithgow is a bit fussed as to Auchinleck's position in connection with the present minor frontier operations. These, during the monsoon, amount to next to nothing, and I presume that Auchinleck will carry on in respect of them until the new Chief Command is set up. When it is and your new Supreme Commander is on the spot, he would naturally take over, whether the actual operations then amounted to anything or not, for the purpose of preparing for bigger things later on. Wavell does not seem to see any serious difficulty in adjusting relations.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

12

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, DARJEELING, *19 June 1943*

2. *Food Supplies.*—Our chief worry remains the question of food supplies. Although recent reports indicate that the situation has slightly eased, we shall not be out of the wood until supplies flow in freely from the neighbouring Provinces. Azizul Haque recently visited Calcutta and has no doubt kept you informed. In the course of Suhrawardy's "Food Drive", now nearing completion, considerable stocks were brought to light, but I fear that it requires a

further influx of rice and paddy to start a general decline in prices and thus bring further supplies on to the market. The "Food Drive" can, therefore, by itself only be expected to be partially successful,—and the aggregation of stocks which will be reported must be far below actuals as it is likely that most holders will under-declare.

3. *High Court.*—Paragraph 9 of the Home Department report[1] gives details of the goings on in the Calcutta High Court. The most dangerous tendency to my mind is the apparent proclivity of the judiciary even in the present war emergency to probe into the motives and machinery of the executive which they have hitherto in the main regarded as outside their purview. I have an uneasy feeling that there is a definite antagonism to the executive in our High Court; and, should it be admitted that the Courts can enquire into the method of passing of orders, and hence query their validity, administration will come to a standstill, and a situation may arise which, so far as I can see, could only be remedied by Parliamentary legislation protecting the executive, in war time at any rate, from undue inquisition on the part of the Courts.

[1] Of 17 June 1943. It described the outcome of nine applications by detained persons for release on the ground that the provision under which they were held (Defence of India Rule 26) was invalid. The Court allowed the applications, whereupon the prisoners were re-arrested within the High Court under Bengal Regulation III of 1818. Subsequently the Court issued rules on police officers, the Chief Secretary and Additional Secretary, the Deputy Commissioner, Special Branch, Calcutta, and the Jail Superintendent 'to show cause why they should not be committed for contempt and why the prisoners should not be released'. L/P&J/5/148.

13

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *19 June 1943*

Your letter of the 8th June[1] came through with surprising speed and reached me in Simla on June 16th—a vast improvement on what we used to be accustomed to.

2. Since its receipt you and I have been busy over the succession to myself, and it is a relief to me that this should now be definitely decided and out of the way. It is a little early yet to test reactions to Wavell's appointment. The first press indications that reached me suggested that it had come as so great a surprise, and was so great a contrast to the politician of Cabinet rank whose appointment had been foreshadowed in press messages from London, that people found it a little difficult to take in. And there is very clearly the feeling

that, as one Indian press man of much experience put it, this is the end of constitutional reform in India, and the feeling also (very natural in a country such as this) of the strong objections to the head of the civil government being himself a distinguished soldier. I have no doubt that things will settle down and people see the position in truer perspective in a few days' time. Meanwhile, I thought Joyce's press guidance excellent, and the best line that could be taken in the circumstances, and I am sure that it will be of use to my people here in getting across a balanced view of this appointment.

3. I am a little uneasy as to the heaviness of the burden that will fall on Wavell. We are faced with all sorts of highly technical questions such as inflation and food, on which his previous experience will not be of great assistance to him; and I have no doubt, either, that the replacement of a politician by a soldier will put on people such as Raisman, an immensely heavier weight of responsibility and work in Council. Indeed, it is over Council that I am chiefly worried for Wavell: for this is a body that needs a particular type of handling, and while I have the highest opinion of his tact, stability and courage, and have not the very slightest apprehension that he will in any circumstances give anything away that he ought to hold on to, I do at the same time feel that our discussions, which are bad enough at present, may spin out to even greater length, to the extent that he cannot have the technical equipment for handling this sort of thing that a man of different earlier experience may have. But he is very wise, and I have great confidence in his judgment. And she, equally, ought to make an admirable Vicereine. She has done the most excellent work in connection with all good causes here since she came out, and my wife has the highest regard for her initiative and co-operation in that sphere. They are, too, both of them (though the Field-Marshal takes perhaps a little knowing and may look rather alarming to the man in the street who has not had to do with him personally) a charming and friendly couple, while his record in his own sphere is undoubtedly one of the first distinction. I hope therefore that all may go well, even if one does look over one's shoulder a little and wish that it could have been possible to find for this most important post a front rank politician with Cabinet experience. But if Wavell can get through the war, and early post-war period that will clear the way for the future.

4. I now turn to Auchinleck. There was no means of communicating with him at Mussoorie, where he was, save over the open telephone which would not have been possible. But in any event I felt no doubt (and I was right in my conjecture) that he would want to talk the whole position over, and that it might not be too easy to secure his acceptance. On receiving authority to go ahead with him I therefore telephoned to him and asked him at once to get

1 Vol. III, No. 764.

into a car and drive to Simla—250 miles. He did so, arriving at 10 P.M. on Thursday the 17th; and I then gave him the Prime Minister's telegram;[2] and asked him to think it over and then come and talk to me. When he had done so an hour later I found that my task was by no means so easy as I had conceived that it might be. He was anxious to be reassured as to the Prime Minister's genuine desire to see him hold this post. I pointed out to him that nothing could have been more flattering than the terms in which the Prime Minister's telegram was couched. He was anxious next to be perfectly certain that Wavell was not going to interfere more than an ordinary Viceroy would with his work as Commander-in-Chief; and he wanted to know whether Wavell knew the position. I told him that he did, and I took him through the drill that you might expect me to employ on such an occasion, pointing out that Wavell was an extremely shrewd and experienced administrator and knew the difficulties of a position such as the present; that it was inevitable that a very eminent soldier, who had been himself previously responsible for this particular charge on the military side, would take a closer and more technical interest in military matters than a civilian or a politician; but that I had every confidence in the capacity of the two men to work side by side, each respecting the other and operating within his own appropriate field. He turned from this to the difficult business of whether the Arakan, Eastern Bengal, and Assam operations were to be a part of the charge of the Commander-in-Chief in India, and he developed very cogently the thesis, with which I myself entirely agree, that this relatively minor and secondary operation, which did not after all constitute our big push, should be regarded in the same light as operations on the North-West Frontier, and as essentially part of the local defence of India. I told him that on that he had my complete sympathy; but that it was impossible for me to say what the nature of the new East Asia Command was to be, since I had had no details as yet from home, and had the strong impression that the scheme was still being worked out. Auchinleck was quite content and did not press this particular issue further or make prior understanding about it a condition of his acceptance, and he appreciated that we must see the whole picture before this comparatively minor detail could be further explored. But I do hope there will be no difficulty about it; and I was disturbed, as you know from my telegram,[3] having regard to his sensitiveness on it, by the wording of the last paragraph of the communiqué.[4] I have suggested to you the possibility of an arranged parliamentary question to clear the air, and I hope that you may think that that is practicable. I do so much hope, too, that it will be possible to leave these operations with the Commander-in-Chief in India. They are a great nuisance, but quite minor: they undoubtedly directly affect Bengal and Assam which are the mustering grounds and reinforcement centres for the troops that are being used; and I fear that we shall get in a dreadful tangle (political issues apart) if we have the Supreme Commander functioning with one foot

in what is locally and technically of course part of the charge of the Commander-in-Chief in India.

5. Auchinleck, admitting that he had been out of the political world for some time and was not too familiar with the latest developments or with how things stood, then enquired what the position was as regards a civil War Member and the old idea (which had come up again, as he knew, at the time of the Cripps discussions) of the Commander-in-Chief being out of Council—a view for which he indicated that he felt great sympathy. I explained how matters stood, but I thought it well to take the opportunity of warning him tactfully but very firmly that whatever his own feelings about matters of this sort, they were essentially matters not for the Government of India, but for the Cabinet and the Viceroy, and that it would be quite intolerable that the Commander-in-Chief should regard himself as in a position to take a particular line about them or press a particular point of view. I said that there was of course no reason in the world why he should not, if he had a particular point of view on any of these matters, discuss it perfectly freely with the Viceroy who would give that point of view due weight. But the responsibility, I reminded him, was not his in any sense, and the responsibility upon a Commander-in-Chief to avoid canvassing a particular line in the political field or allowing himself to be led in a particular direction by the politician was very heavy. And I ended by telling him that, while on any matter of this kind, and particularly on the position of the Commander-in-Chief, he was perfectly entitled to have his own opinion, I must make it quite clear to him that I could not regard it as in any sense open to him either to canvass or press those views. The invitation from the Prime Minister to him was to serve in precisely the same statutory position as that which Wavell is vacating. He took all this very well, and I think that he was probably merely anxious to clear the air and try and see the geography of the political layout here. But the point is an important one, and I think you would do well to bear it in mind. For Auchinleck is a strong personality: he has always been a good deal less wary and educated politically than Wavell; there is likely to be an endeavour (it appears already in the *Hindustan Times* comment today on Wavell's appointment) to drive a wedge between him and the Viceroy, and to take the line that

[2] No. 3.

[3] 213–S.C. of 18 June. Lord Linlithgow suggested a parliamentary answer should be given, explaining General Auchinleck's responsibilities, on the lines: 'General Auchinleck has taken over responsibility for all functions previously discharged by Field Marshal Wavell and should be responsible for operations in [Eastern Bengal, Assam, and Arakan] . . . Future arrangements as regards control of these and local operations will be decided in due course.' L/WS/1/1274.

[4] The last para. of the communiqué, published on 19 June 1943, read: 'It is proposed to relieve the Commander-in-Chief, India, of the responsibility for the conduct of the operations against Japan, and to set up a separate East Asia Command for that purpose. A further announcement on this subject will be made soon.'

Auchinleck is a progressive and intelligent person whose advice ought to be followed in all these matters; and he may rush in where a warier man would fear to tread. Wavell is not likely to be rushed off his feet by any impression of that type, but if it were to happen, and I hope it may not, it might well make his position more difficult.

6. I need not trouble you with the rest of our conversation, out of which nothing of great substance emerged. But after it all, and after a further period for reflection, he decided to accept, and I approved the draft reply which was then despatched.[5] But I was at pains, before the despatch of that reply, and having regard to the conversations we had just had on the political issue, to tell him in the most categorical terms that if he had any reservations about, or hesitations or doubts on, any point, or if there was any point, political or other, which he wanted to put on record, now was the time: that he was bound to this telegram once it went; and that he could not resile from it. He assured me that he desired to add nothing, and he repeated this when I pressed him again; and I was glad to hope in the light of that that our conversations had had a useful effect in clearing the air and in bringing home to him the limits within which the Commander-in-Chief has to work.

7. Let me only add that I have not the least doubt in the world that he is the right man so far as the Indian Army is concerned, and that I have every confidence in the value of the contribution he ought to be able to make both in regard to Indian Army morale and in regard to a quite different thing, the administrative side of the army here, with which I have been far from satisfied for some time past. And he has the advantage that he comes back extremely fit, very fresh after his enforced period of retirement, and full of enthusiasm. I think it would have been easier for him had the Viceroy been a politician, and the reasons for that are of course obvious; and clearly forbearance will be needed on both sides, particularly given the past history of the two men and the way in which they have replaced one another at various times. But I trust that all will in fact go smoothly.

8. What I have said above covers the most important part of the comment I have to make this week. But the thing that is most in my mind is the food problem, which has become of excessive complexity. The conditions of this country constitute a peculiar difficulty, as you well know, and I find that Vigor, in whose judgment and experience I have very great confidence, thinks it about the most puzzling problem of the kind that he has ever had to deal with. I believe there to be enough food inside the country: the difficulty is in getting [it] out in this sub-continent of subsistence farmers, full of hope, many of them, that if they hold on to their produce they will be able to sell it at a much higher price; while others are apprehensive that if they strip themselves now they

will find themselves in difficulties later. The position is further complicated by the quite open attempts of certain ministers such as Sir Chhotu Ram in the Punjab (I am sending you copies of correspondence with Glancy about him)[6] to incite (for that is the right word, I think) holders not to part with their grain and to stand out for their price; while I see that a Minister in Orissa has just advised that everyone should hold a minimum of six months supply. The basic food plan,[7] of which copies were sent to you earlier I think, showed signs of creaking extremely badly, given the reluctance of district officers, &c., in the Provinces to facilitate the transfer of grain from their own areas and to encourage people to give it up; and we got to the point a fortnight ago at which it looked as though a free trade solution (possibly with a reservation in respect of the North-Western area which might have been made a free trade unit on its own) was the only possible one.[8] But on putting that to the Provinces they came back so violently, both on the inflationary side and, in the case of Bombay, on the threat to the recent textile agreement, that we have had to consider it further. After a talk in Council I saw Wood; and Vigor today, and I am going into the whole business again in Council at the beginning of next week. I propose to make no comment in this letter for the moment on the line which we shall take, though I am myself still disposed to think that there is a good deal to be said for the free trade proposition, but possibly applied with a very much more conservative timing than the Department originally had in view. I fully accept the inflationary risks, but Raisman, while putting those high, and very fairly, is equally unable at the moment to provide me with any very satisfactory alternative. However, as I say, I do not propose to enlarge on this matter at the present time, since the business of exploration will have to be carried a little further before we can know where we stand.

9. On the inflationary side, as you know, we are hard at it. I have read with very great interest your official telegram[9] of a few days ago. I was very glad, I need not say, to see, and we have at once accepted, this proposition to sell gold, and I do hope that we may be able to make some progress in the matter of silver (if we could make it, it would incidentally help us immensely over the food problem); but here again I do not propose to weary you with any very lengthy comment on this highly technical business [?or] on what we are doing about it.

10. I await with the greatest interest details of the solution of the issue as between the Triumvirate and the Supreme Commander. I telegraphed

5 See No. 3, note 2. 6 MSS. EUR. F. 125/92.

7 Namely a scheme drawn up early in 1943 by which quotas of food-grains were to be provided by surplus areas and allocated to deficit areas under the supervision of the Central Government; see Vol. III, No. 658. A summary of the basic plan was sent to the India Office in tel. 3116 of 21 April. L/E/8/3307: ff 396–7. An account of its evolution is given in Part I, Chapter 7 of *Famine Inquiry Commission Report on Bengal* 'The Woodhead Report', (New Delhi, 1945), pp. 42–54.

8 See Vol. III, Nos. 762, 766. 9 13191 of 12 June. L/F/7/1233.

yesterday[10] to tell you that I find Auchinleck in almost complete agreement with myself upon this crucial matter.

* * *

21 June 1943

19. Raisman, when I saw him this morning touched on the question of his own position given the fact that his term is due to expire next spring, and reminded me of the relevance of a decision as to whether he was to carry on after that date or not to the planning of any programme. (You will remember that at an earlier stage—paragraphs 18–20 of my letter of the 30th January 1943[11]—I mentioned that he had sounded me as to a possible Governorship. But that was not what was in his mind now, and he was mainly concerned as to the effect on planning here of his possible replacement by a non-official Indian.) I told him that the filling of his vacancy would not be a matter for me; but I think it well to let you know that the point is in the air. My own view is perfectly clear, and it has been reinforced by the selection of Wavell, who has not of course the familiarity with the handling of a political position that an ex-Cabinet Minister would have had, and who deserves, I should have thought, every possible assistance in carrying the exceedingly heavy and unexpected burden which he will have to face. I would myself, had I been responsible in those circumstances, have recommended to you and to the Cabinet that Raisman should be reappointed when his term ends; and that Maxwell, whom it would not be fair to expect to stay on here after next spring, should be succeeded by an European Civil Servant. I believe that we could in present circumstances get those two appointments through without any particular difficulty. There would be some grumbling from the Congress, and the usual sort of complaints from *The Times*. But issues of very great importance turn on the decision, and I am certain myself in the light now of much experience in this business as to the wisdom of the course which I suggest. I shall probably before I hand over let Winston have a word on the subject, and impress upon him as strongly as I can the vital necessity of keeping these posts in European hands. (There would, I think, be much difficulty in maintaining the position of the Finance Membership alone remaining in European hands.) But I would like you to know my mind in the first place, and would like also to feel that I could look for your support. It will not be easy to find the right type of man for the Home Membership, but one suggestion that has occurred to me is Twynam. He was a very good Chief Secretary in Bengal; and I was impressed by his work as acting Governor of Assam over a period of many months; while I think you and I probably both feel that his reports and letters are among the best and most considered that we receive from the Civilian Governors out here. Whether he would be as good as Home Member as he is as Governor I cannot say, but the two posts require very much the same

qualifications. In the Home Department itself, Conran-Smith is rather a sick man, and hardly in any case, I should have thought, of the calibre that is required, though he is a most co-operative and hard working official. Sir Richard Tottenham is again of good quality, and an admirable draftsman, but my experience of him is (though my opinion of him is high) that he rather needs a ram-rod behind him. It goes without saying that, if Twynam was to be invited to serve, we should have to protect his position financially and otherwise, in much the same way when we took Wylie from the same Province to make him Political Adviser two or three years ago. I would not anticipate any particular difficulty were the recommendation still with me in filling Twynam's post were he to leave the Central Provinces. It might even be worth considering moving Lewis from his swamps in Orissa to the drier climate of Nagpur!

★ ★ ★

21. I am sending you by this bag copies of correspondence that I have had with the Governors of Bihar,[12] the Central Provinces,[13] and the United Provinces,[14] about the possible formation of ministries in those Provinces. I do not myself take the prospect at all seriously. Rutherford in Bihar has a somewhat intricate situation, carefully analysed in his letter of 13th June, No. 400-G.B.: but I am quite certain myself that the material which C. P. Narayan Sinha claims to have behind him is not sufficiently substantial to build on, and as you will see, I have so informed Rutherford (the position would, I need not say, be different if he really could be certain of anyone producing a *stable* majority committed to the prosecution of the war). Hallett's letter of 16th June No. U.P.-197 shows that he does not feel very optimistic about progress in the United Provinces. Twynam has discussed the matter in his letter of 10th June No. 155-G.C.P. There again I see nothing to suggest that there is any very active possibility of the formation of a ministry with a stable majority, &c. I have heard nothing from Bombay, and assume that Colville sees nothing there worth reporting to us. Our policy must of course be to return to parliamentary government where conditions justify that, and we would not be justified wherever there was a stable majority and a ministry committed to the prosecution of the war, in standing in the way. But those conditions have not yet been realised in any of these Provinces, and I am bound to say that I see very little prospect at this stage of their being so realised. I trouble you with the whole of the correspondence I have had with the Governors concerned because I am naturally anxious that you should be as fully in the picture as

[10] See Vol. III, Nos. 755 and 769. In telegram 214–S.C. of 18 June, Lord Linlithgow reported General Auchinleck's denial that, as a result of his experience in Egypt, he was opposed to a command system with three co-equal commanders-in-chief. This was 'directly contrary to fact'. L/WS/1/1274.

[11] Relevant paras. omitted from Vol. III, No. 372. [12] MSS. EUR. F. 125/50.

[13] MSS. EUR. F. 125/64. [14] MSS. EUR. F. 125/106.

possible. But I have not thought it worth bothering you with a telegram since there are no elements of urgency about the situation.

All luck.

PS.—At the risk of appearing malicious I cannot refrain from telling you that I read the estimate contained in paragraph 3 of your letter[15] with some amusement in the light of your telegram No. 12-U,[16] dated a couple of days later!

[15] Vol. III, No. 764. [16] Vol. III, No. 768.

14

Mr Churchill to Mr Amery

L/PO/8/9a: f 27

MOST SECRET 10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, *20 June 1943*

Prime Minister's Personal Minute Serial No. M400/3

Secretary of State for India.

1. Your two papers.[1] I agree to the addition to the Cabinet Minute which you propose. I was myself convinced by the Cabinet discussion that no exceptional limitation should be placed upon Sir Archibald Wavell's tenure as Viceroy, other than that contained in the private communication that I made to him. I should be prepared, if it were thought desirable, to drop that too, now that the appointment has been so well received.

2. You will have seen my telegram to the Viceroy with its various enclosures.[2] It is very important that all parties concerned should know exactly where they stand, and what is purposed.

W. S. C.

[1] Presumably Nos. 10 and 11.

[2] See No. 13 para. 4. In telegram 651 of 20 June Mr Churchill explained to Lord Linlithgow that there could be no question of the C.-in-C. India having 'the slightest responsibility for or share in' the operations on the Eastern frontier and that the new command had been set up because of the unsatisfactory results of recent operations in Assam and Arakan. General Auchinleck's responsibilities remained however of the first importance. He had been chosen to command the vastly expanded Indian Army because of his influence with native officers and his great knowledge of their conditions. In his final para. Mr Churchill mentioned that he was making arrangements for Field Marshal Wavell to sit in at Cabinets before his departure. In telegram 652 of 20 June, Mr Churchill forwarded to Lord Linlithgow a minute from the C.O.S. committee opposing General Auchinleck's contention that he should control operations in Eastern India and in telegram 653 of the same date he forwarded an extract from C.I.D. paper 172–D of 1929. L/PO/4/26: ff 760–70.

15

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/9a: f 26

INDIA OFFICE, *21 June 1943*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 23/43

Prime Minister

I understand that a point of precedent has been raised to the effect that commoners on appointment to the Viceroyalty have only, in the first instance, been made barons. This is correct, the only previous cases being Curzon, Hardinge, and Halifax. But surely this is not a case to be governed by ordinary precedents affecting the sequence of honours progressively conferred on estimable politicians or civil servants. Wavell is a man who in our darkest hour won a series of resounding victories against overwhelming odds and saved a pivotal region of the war only less important than Britain itself.

In the last war all the leading Army Commanders like Rawlinson, Plumer, Horne and Milne, got their baronies and money grants. Allenby, whose record more closely resembled Wavell's, got his viscounty and £50,000, and naturally got nothing further on his appointment as High Commissioner in Egypt in the same year. Both Wavell's military achievement and the post to which he has been appointed are surely greater than Allenby's.

Nor were these honours only conferred at the end of the war. French received his viscounty in 1916 when he was relieved of his Command in France, and Jellicoe in 1917 on being replaced as First Sea Lord. There would thus be ample precedent for giving Wavell a viscounty on retiring from active military service irrespective of his appointment to India.

Public opinion, here, in India and in the Army, would I believe be surprised and shocked if it were now announced that Wavell was only to receive a barony to cover both what he has achieved and what he is undertaking. Such an announcement would, I fear, appreciably detract from the fine impression created by the appointment.[1]

L. S. AMERY

[1] In his telegram 691 of 30 June, Mr Amery informed Lord Linlithgow that an announcement was to be made the following day creating Field Marshal Wavell a viscount. In telegram 692 of 30 June, Mr Turnbull explained to Sir G. Laithwaite that the dignity had been conferred on the analogy of First World War viscounties and for this reason the announcement did not say it was occasioned by Field Marshal Wavell's appointment as Viceroy. L/PO/8/9a: ff 12–13.

16

Note by Mr Turnbull

L/PO/8/9a: f 22

INDIA OFFICE, *21 June 1943*

S/S spoke to Sir A. Wavell on 21/6 & asked him what the Prime Minister had said to him about his tenure. Sir A. Wavell said that the Prime Minister had said that he wished to be free to make a new appointment after three years if that should be necessary but that he hoped it would not be.

F. F. T.

17

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

SECRET AND PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *21 June 1943*

The long-vexed problem of your successor has been settled at last. It is now ten days ago that I had a long talk with Winston in the garden of Downing Street. . . . . .[1] I think myself Wavell should do well, and coming at this moment, when military operations are looming ahead, and when there is a general feeling that nothing immediate can emerge politically, I felt the appointment was likely to be received much better than it might have been at any other time.

2. As a matter of fact, the reception from the press here has been remarkably good, from *The Times* to the *Daily Worker* down. The American and Australian press have seen in it a determination to wage the eastern war vigorously and are correspondingly pleased; and such information as has come in from India would suggest that the appointment has not produced any serious adverse reaction. On the contrary, I hope that, expecting little in the way of early constitutional advance, the Indian political world will be relatively grateful for anything it may get meanwhile and may settle down in a more realistic spirit to face the constitutional problem ahead of it. Nothing, I fancy, could have been worse than the appointment of a Viceroy from whom something spectacular and imaginative was expected and who in fact could do nothing in particular.

3. Auchinleck's appointment has also been very favourably commented on and will I am sure be welcomed, not only by the Indian Army, but in political circles. I was struck myself by the genuine delight Mudaliar showed in the

new set-up. Auchinleck will have a big job in pulling together the enormously expanded Indian army and in improving its training and morale. Winston at the moment has got one of his fits of panic and talks about a drastic reduction of any army that might shoot us in the back. Some reduction may possibly be needed, though the Cabinet not long ago decided to stand still at the present reduced target. The great thing is to organise and train what we have got, and which may indeed be very much needed as the war develops eastwards. I confess I do not like see-saws in policy.

4. I must say that I still remain a little puzzled by your change from wishing for a Supreme Commander, Eastern Operations, to a triumvirate, and indeed, though you have since telegraphed[2] to say that I was mistaken, a paragraph in one of your letters[3] seemed to me to imply that you had feared that this might be an American Supreme Commander. The strongest reason to my mind, next to the strategical reasons which I think are by themselves strong enough, is that in the absence of a Supreme Commander over Stilwell, the latter will go on magnifying his functions aggressively and increasingly claim, what with Chinese troops, &c., to be an equal authority in the conduct of the war with ourselves. Inside the military framework and placed directly under a military commander, there is at any rate a better chance of his being kept in order. From your point of view, or rather from Wavell's I should have thought that there were considerable advantages in a single constitutional channel of communication with the Government of India (whatever short cuts may be agreed upon) over an arrangement under which three several Commanders might communicate conflicting orders or wishes which the Viceroy *qua* Minister of State would then have to co-ordinate. There would still of course be plenty to do on the Minister of State side and the question of what kind of small staff Wavell is to have for that purpose will have to be settled in the next few weeks.

5. Wavell is coming into the office today to take up a room and begin his study of the problem as seen from this end, as well as of those sides of it which he has not been cognisant of hitherto. You have had Winston's telegram[4] saying that he is to attend Cabinets while here and that in itself provides quite a good reason for not sending over another representative when Mudaliar goes back about the middle of July. I must consider with you by telegram how far that can be in any way formalised and how far a Viceroy-designate can be considered, in view of his past experience as Member of the Council, a formal representative of the Government of India.

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[1] These dots are reproduced from MSS. EUR. F. 125/12.
[2] In telegram 165–S.C. of 12 June. L/WS/1/1274: f 182.
[3] Vol. III, No. 755, para. 6.
[4] See No. 14, note 2.

10. I have read with great interest the Political Department circular of 20th May[5] to Residents calling for their early proposals for effecting mergers or co-operative grouping of smaller States within their charges to follow on the action already taken in the first-named direction in the Western India and Gujarat Agencies. I am indeed glad that you have decided to insist on the formulation of a general policy in this matter on uniform lines and to take full advantage of the initiative gained by the action taken on Craik's report.[6]

11. I note that your Political Department are not very happy[7] about the scheme promoted by non-official elements in the Deccan States Agency in consultation with the All-India States' Peoples' Conference for a Federation of the Deccan States, feeling that such a scheme should have owed its initiative to the Rulers themselves. That would, no doubt, have been better, but I suggest that the scheme itself contains features of considerable interest which are worthy of careful examination. Would it be worth while asking Gwyer to have a look at it?

12. In particular it is interesting to see that they propose to base their Assembly on indirect election. Where I think that constitution could be improved is in substituting for a responsible ministry in our sense, which can so easily mean a ministry responsible to an outside party caucus, a ministry on the Swiss model, elected by proportional representation, for the period of the life of the Legislature, either by the Legislature as a whole or by the Assembly. The Swiss system works so well on the whole, and gives so much greater stability, that there is much to be said for it in Indian conditions. It could conceivably of course be coupled with a right to the President, but not to the Assembly, to dismiss the Executive and the Assembly, but on the whole I believe it would be sounder to follow the Swiss model and exclude the possibility of dissolution or of the dismissal of a Ministry. Anyhow, I hope the scheme will receive sympathetic and practical consideration, first of all by the States concerned, and then by you or your successor, as Crown Representative.

5 'Future of the smaller Indian States' L/P&S/13/973: ff 235–6.
6 Sir H. Craik: 'Note on Mr. Shattock's Report on the Future of the Smaller States and Estates of Gujarat and Kathiawar' dated 21 October 1942. *Ibid.*
7 L/P&S/13/1099.

18

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *22 June 1943*

Many thanks for your private and secret letter of 2nd June[1] which arrived a good many days after your letter of 8th June.[2] So much has happened since then that there is not perhaps a great deal that I need say on the specific points taken by you.

2. As regards the Gandhi–Jinnah correspondence, I quite agree with what you say in paragraph 1, and, as you will have gathered from letters[3] that have crossed your present letter, my opinion of Jinnah's skill (and indeed his statesmanship) has been a good deal increased by his handling of this business. It has ceased to be of any interest here now—it was indeed substantially deflated from the day on which Jinnah issued his reply.

3. I was much interested in your comments in paragraphs 3 and 4 about the East Asian Command. That is now disposed of in principle, though there are these awkward loose ends such as Arakan, &c., about which I wrote to you in my letter of 19th/21st June[4] and which I hope to discuss further in the light of the Prime Minister's telegram[5] to me with Auchinleck tomorrow. I shall probably have something to add later in this letter after our discussion. I think there is a great deal in what you say in paragraph 4, and I was interested in your idea of Mountbatten as a possible Commander, though from Winston's telegram I gather that the command is likely to go to the air.

4. You have been most helpful, and so have the India Office, over inflation, silver, &c., and I am most grateful to you. The issue is of really crucial importance, and I do hope we shall be able to get it across to the Americans.

[Paras. 5 and 6, on the Secretary of State's Advisers; para. 7, on honours for Sir M. Gwyer and Sir R. Lumley; and para. 8, acknowledging a note on Defence Rule 26, omitted.]

9. I was glad to get your telegram of the 12th June, No. 13178,[6] Personal, about the possible employment of military officers to assist us in these times of shortage of qualified Civilians; and I have now authorised Rutherford to go ahead so far as Bihar is concerned, subject to the reservation which you

[1] Vol. III, No. 758. [2] Vol. III, No. 764. [3] Vol. III, Nos. 755 and 769. [4] No. 13.

[5] See No. 14, note 2.

[6] Transmitting Mr Amery's agreement to the employment of military officers in non-reserved posts in Bihar but requiring his Advisers' approval were it proposed to fill reserved posts. L/S&G/7/284.

indicated in the first paragraph of your telegram. I will send you by this bag copy[7] of certain further comment which I have had from Maxwell, for I think that will help to clear the air. You will see that the point which you have been anxious to safeguard had already been in our minds here. I am still, I confess, much attracted by arrangements of this nature, and I shall be interested to see the outcome of further examination of the issue by Home Department and the other Departments concerned here. We will of course, if there is any question of applying arrangements similar to those now proposed for Bihar to other Provinces, consult you.

26 June 1943

[Para. 10, on Sir G. Cunningham's extension of office, omitted.]

11. I am a good deal bothered about these struggles between the judiciary and the executive, particularly in Bengal.[8] I will not comment in detail in this letter on the judgments that have recently been passed—you are familiar with the problems they have confronted us with, and I have telegraphed[9] in particular in regard to these proceedings for contempt which have been initiated in Calcutta. I have talked things over with Maxwell, Asoka Roy, and in a very general way with Spens (who is staying with me at the moment). I dare say that there is a certain amount to be said on both sides, and that particularly in Bengal (where incidentally I cannot believe that the present tension could ever have come about had the Governor been someone with the experience or of the quality of Anderson) matters may have been so dealt with by the Local Government's officials as to cause legitimate irritation to the High Court. But I am not perfectly happy, and I am not too clear in my own mind as to the procedure best to be adopted.

12. Asoka Roy, with whom I had a very frank and friendly conversation, seemed himself rather at a loss to suggest any specific solution other than an apology by the executive, of which I told him that there was no chance whatever. He suggested that one cause for the ill-temper of the High Court was that things had been done under the Ordinances which the Governor-General in approving the Ordinance had never had in mind. I asked him whether merits had in fact anything to do with the point of law before the Court in Bengal, which was surely the validity or invalidity of the instrument. He admitted that, but said that he felt that the feeling that the powers granted had been misused, or used in a manner that had not been intended by those who conferred them, lay in some degree at the back of the Court's decisions and of its recent behaviour. He suggested, too, that there was a great deal of feeling in Calcutta against the I.C.S.—which we may take as meaning the local executive. I told him that I had throughout my time here done my best to uphold the dignity and the position of the judiciary, and to preserve and protect its proper position as against the executive, whether separated as it was at the top, or joint as in the

present structure of the Indian Civil Service at lower levels, but that I could not feel that it was to the credit of a High Court to have the excuse made for it that its feeling against Government had influenced its decisions on matters of law. But Roy could suggest nothing very definite to help things except that I should myself find an opportunity of seeing Derbyshire. I told him that I would bear in mind what he said, but that I must be regarded as committed to nothing whatever.

13. Maxwell told me that he could not but take a very serious view of the attitude of the judiciary at the present time. He went so far as to suggest that circumstances might arise in which it would not be possible for us, consistently with the maintenance here on the one hand of the war effort, and on the other of internal security, to acquiesce in the type of interference that was now taking place. I told him that it was pretty clear to me that one of the difficulties confronting the Governor-General in dealing with the situation was the absence of a machine for handling this sort of thing. He as Home Member was not responsible, nor was my Law Member. I could, and would, take advantage of any opportunity that Spens might privately give me of taking his advice, but there again I had to be careful. I was myself in my capacity as Governor-General to some extent party to the dispute, and the bulk of the matters which had caused us discomfort of late were at the present time *sub judice*. The situation was therefore a delicate one. I added that I thought it would be a great mistake to treat this state of things lightly. It might very well be the forerunner or the source of one of those unhappy struggles between the executive and the judiciary with which he was familiar in past history. I asked him in these circumstances to let me have as early as he could a completely objective statement examining and recording recent instances in which difficulty had arisen, which I could send to you. I asked him also to think over the possibility of inviting His Majesty's Government, if these difficulties continued, to send out an experienced High Court Judge who might, acting on behalf of the Governor-General, look into the state of things and give advice as to what in his judgment could best be done—a business that need not necessarily take more than a month or six weeks. As for Maxwell's suggestion that we might in certain circumstances have to seek for the removal of certain Judges, I contented myself with taking note of it and I did not think it worth developing with him what would I imagine be the very serious difficulties that would have to be confronted in that connection. I am not too sure of practice (and would welcome your view): but my impression is that a Judge or Judges could not in such circumstances be removed save by petition to both Houses or the like; and that both Houses would however tiresome the courts might have shown themselves to have been, be exceedingly anxious to protect the position of the

[7] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138. [8] See No. 12. [9] L/P&J/8/633.

judiciary and not to approve action of so serious a character unless the case was proved up to the hilt. The proving of the case would inevitably mean the washing of a good deal of dirty linen from which, as I have suggested above, the executive might not necessarily emerge untainted on the floor of the House.

14. So much for Maxwell and Asoka Roy. Spens when I had a talk with him yesterday gave me the opportunity which I had hoped he might, to touch on the subject, and was sensible and reassuring. He said that very much the same sort of difficulty had had to be faced at home in the earlier stages of the war, when not only the High Court, but Members of Parliament familiar with, and attaching the utmost importance to the doctrine of habeas corpus, had strongly opposed the interference with the normal processes of law in such matters which had been necessitated by, or had flowed from, the circumstances of the war. He recognised the isolated position of the Governor-General and my difficulties in obtaining advice on a matter such as this, and he promised to think over my suggestion, which I put to him also, about the possibility in certain circumstances of sending a man out from home. I found him sympathetic and extremely reasonable. He thought that he himself could probably best help us and [*sic*] when he made contacts with the various High Courts all of whom (except Calcutta!—Derbyshire apparently not having taken the appointment too well) had invited him to come and see them or stay with them.

15. I do not propose to comment further in this letter: but I would like you to have the background which I have given above in case we should have more trouble later; and if there is any interim comment which you may care to let me have in advance of receiving the statement which I have asked Home Department to prepare, I need not say how much I should welcome it. I am most anxious myself, for obvious reasons, to avoid any breach with the Judges if I can possibly help it, and to reduce and eliminate existing tension.

[Para. 16, on Sir Asoka Roy's opposition to an extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court; and para. 17, on a discussion with Sir P. Spens on this issue, omitted.]

18. Spens makes a very good impression. He is quick, sensible, and he has of course the great advantage not only of long years of active and successful practice at the Bar (I always felt that Gwyer suffered from the lack of that), but of having been for a number of years in the House of Commons. I think and hope that he should do us well.

19. Many thanks for your private and personal telegram of the 22nd June, No. 661,[10] on this very important question of the possible reduction of the Indian Army, &c. I have at once given copy of it to Auchinleck, and I will of course let you know the result of his examination of this matter as early as possible.

20. As you will have gathered from my reply,[11] Auchinleck, after discussion, accepts the position as regards Arakan and the Chindwin. There is a certain amount of untidiness and I think there is a not inconsiderable risk of people tripping one another up. But our object must be to try to get this business going as smoothly as possible, and I hope very much therefore that we shall soon have the detail of the new command, so that we can clear the ground as far in advance as possible in relation to any area over which there is room for misunderstanding or conflict.

21. You will receive by this bag copy of a letter from Herbert, dated the 16th June,[12] in which he raises the ticklish question of whether it would be in order to refuse to accept a man as Chief Minister on the ground that he did not command the Governor's confidence. I am not too happy about the way things are going in Bengal at the moment. Nazimuddin has been endeavouring to secure permission for his Hindu Ministers to contact Sarat Bose, a permission which we have not, after consideration here, been able to give. The food position (though Bengal have done an admirable drive against hoarding and have managed to draw out quite a substantial quantity of grain) is not one which the ordinary government much enjoys handling. In other words the ice is a bit thin under Herbert so far as the Nazimuddin Government is concerned, and that being so, he naturally has to try to consider what alternatives are likely to present themselves if Nazimuddin throws his hand in. It is at this point that he of course begins to realise how expensive his handling of events at the end of March and the fall of Fazlul Huq may prove to be, and his letter of 16th June makes it very clear to me that the chickens show signs of coming home early to roost. Herbert is in fact fighting for his own life though he does not seem to understand that that is so. I have asked the Reforms Office to go into the general point, and I am considering their advice. But I am not anxious, as you will understand, to commit myself before I must. My own present feeling, subject to further consideration, is quite clearly that if either Fazlul Huq or even Shyama Prasad Mookerjee can satisfy the Governor first that they command a stable majority, and secondly that they are prepared to give full support to the war effort, that no question could arise of his refusing to invite one or other of them to assist him in forming a Ministry. Fazlul Huq is a curious person, and it is just conceivable that despite the difficulties that arose between him and the Governor last March they might be able to pull on together for a while in such an event. But the situation would clearly be a very unsatisfactory one. Nor do I at all welcome the idea of going into Section

[10] This tel. explained that the suggested reduction in the Indian Army was based on doubts as to the soundness of much of the material in the Army and was intended to offset the cost of pay increases for Indian soldiers. It asked the G. of I. for its considered views. L/WS/1/707: ff 360–2.

[11] Not traced in India Office Records. [12] No. 6.

93 if we can avoid it, though here again that is a possibility that we may have to face.

22. Since dictating the earlier part of this letter I have had your very helpful telegram about this Bengal contempt of Court business,[13] and I have at once telegraphed to Herbert to ask him for further and specific details (I send you a copy of my telegram[14] by this bag, though if the case boils up quickly I shall have to telegraph to you). As I have already suggested I think the executive, if what one hears is true, have been definitely heavy-handed. As it happens I have just had a long complaint, with which I will not trouble you at this stage, from Derbyshire, the Chief Justice of Bengal, about the handling by the Bengal Government of a recent case of a man who endeavoured to bribe an income-tax officer and who, having been sentenced to imprisonment after full consideration by the High Court, then managed to get out as part of a general jail delivery, thanks, I fear, to the somewhat easy-going handling of the matter by the Bengal Secretariat. Derbyshire in fact is rather off the mark in certain of his comments or suggestions, and I shall be able, I hope, to make that clear to him. But I shall probably take the opportunity also to suggest to him that he might come up and discuss this particular case a little further when I could put my experts in touch with him. If he were to do so that would give an opportunity of bringing Spens and him together without any move from either Chief Justice to the other, and I might also have some chance of pouring oil on the troubled waters that at present separate the Bengal executive and the judiciary.

23. There are no signs as yet of any reaction on Gandhi's part to Wavell's appointment or indeed of any immediate intention on his part to make any fresh move, though we should be very unwise to exclude the possibility. I have been the more interested to see the copy which Maxwell has sent to me of a letter from Gandhi of 23rd June[15] replying to a letter from Maxwell dealing with Gandhi's comments on the speech delivered by him in the Assembly. It is moderate (not to say definitely low) in tone and gives no hint of any disposition on the Mahatma's part to make an early move.

Best Luck.

[13] See No. 12, note 1. In his tel. 14250 of 26 June Mr Amery advised Lord Linlithgow there was little doubt the Viceroy's Letters Patent allowed him to exercise the power of pardon in respect of punishments for contempt of court. If such action were challenged on a technicality, Mr Amery would advise the King to modify the Letters Patent, but that the Royal prerogative ought not to be exercised in a case where the authority or dignity of a court had been glaringly disregarded. L/P&J/8/633.

[14] No. 277-S.C. of 27 June. L/P&J/8/633.

[15] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138; see *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), p. 24.

19

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/2527: f 115

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *23 June 1943, 9.15 pm*
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *Received: 24 June*

667. Paragraph 31 of your private letter of 2nd/4th May.[1] Social policy. Owing to Prime Minister's recent absence[2] these matters were not taken in Cabinet and have been dormant since but there are already signs that they will be brought up soon mainly with a view to giving Wavell some sort of indication of Cabinet's wishes. I think it would be valuable if you could let me have as soon as may be a personal telegram giving your views after consultation with your advisers on the general proposals in Cripps' note[3] and more generally on social and economic policy in connection with reconstruction. I am as anxious as anyone to see these matters tackled in an energetic and progressive spirit at the top but I am anxious to avoid any injunctions being given before all the issues constitutional and practical have been considered in the light of official advice.

[1] Vol. III, No. 681.
[2] Mr Churchill had been away from London visiting Washington and North Africa from 4 May to 5 June.
[3] Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 276.

20

Sir K. Fitze to Sir A. Lothian

L/P&S/13/998: ff 179–80

SECRET NEW DELHI, *25 June 1943*
No. F. 376–P/42.

Post-war position of Hyderabad

Sir,
I am directed to refer to your letter No. 3479–C,[1] dated the 25th January 1943, with which you forwarded a letter from the President, His Exalted Highness the Nizam's Executive Council, No. 633–C.C.[2] dated the 20th December 1942, which explains the attitude of the Nizam's Government to post-war constitutional changes in so far as they may affect Hyderabad.

[1] Vol. III, No. 359. [2] Vol. III, No. 286.

2. The letter raises many very broad and difficult issues which it would be fruitless to attempt to solve until clearer indications are available as to what the future political structure of India is likely to be and how far the existing degree of the unity of the country is to be preserved. I am however to convey the following observations of the Crown Representative in regard to the question, to which His Exalted Highness's Government naturally attach vital importance, of the Treaty obligations of the Crown for the defence of His Exalted Highness's Dominions.

3. So far as the continuity of those obligations is concerned there is the assurance given at Delhi by Sir Stafford Cripps on behalf of His Majesty's Government to the representatives of the States that 'we will provide for everything necessary to implement our Treaty obligations to the non-adhering States. For this purpose the necessary sanctions would be available to the Crown, including the use of force in the last resort'.[3] That assurance was clear and categorical, though it did not touch upon the subsidiary question raised in paragraph 4 of the letter under reply regarding the disposal of the territories ceded, assigned or leased as the price of defence. There is of course a distinction between cessions and leases, and the Crown Representative is not unmindful of the complications arising from the fact that the inhabitants of Berar are His Exalted Highness's subjects and that the discretion of His Majesty's Government to incorporate that area in any new administrative entity which may arise from future constitutional changes is limited by the provisions of the Agreement of 1936[4] and of Section 47 of the Government of India Act, 1935.[5] But apart from constitutional complications inherent in those provisions, the Crown Representative finds it difficult to accept the thesis that 'the privilege of enjoying the cession or assignment goes hand in hand with the responsibility of fulfilling the obligations for military assistance'. On the contrary, he is of the opinion that so long as the British Government acknowledge the continuity of those obligations and make appropriate arrangements for implementing them whenever the necessity may arise, they have full liberty to dispose of whatever was received by them as the price of their guarantees, even to the extent of incorporation in some new form of constitutional entity.

4. At the present stage of uncertainty as to the future the Crown Representative feels that no useful purpose would be served by attempting any more detailed reply to this important communication from His Exalted Highness's Government. Their views have, however, been brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government and will, of course, receive further and most careful attention as soon as the way becomes clear for taking up these momentous questions from the stage where they were left by Sir Stafford Cripps.

5. I am to request that, if you see no objection, a reply in the above terms may now be sent to His Exalted Highness's Government.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

K. S. FITZE
Secretary to his Excellency
the Crown Representative

[3] Vol. I, No. 527, p. 649. Mr Clauson here minuted: 'The private conversations of Sir S. C[ripps] have not hitherto been quoted, I think, in a formal way like this. M.J.C. 9/7.'

[4] For this Agreement see *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 13 November 1936.

[5] Section 47 of the Government of India Act 1935 provided, *inter alia*, that while any such agreement remained in force between the Nizam and H.M.G., Berar and the Central Provinces were to be deemed one Governor's Province, and that references in the Act to His Majesty's subjects were to include also Berari subjects of the Nizam.

21

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *28 June 1943*

Winston has not yet finally settled details about the South-East Asia Supreme Command, but I hope it will be settled in its main principles either this week or next. The first memorandum[1] which he sent round contained the rather startling proposal that the assistant "of ministerial status" who is to be attached to the Viceroy in connection with his Minister of State functions should directly manage the munition factories in India! His incapacity to understand the Indian political set up is indeed at times amazing. However, I anticipate no difficulty in making him see the impossibility of that suggestion, as well as making it clear to him that whatever the status of the assistant to the Viceroy, it must be the Viceroy, and the Viceroy alone, with and through whom the War Cabinet here must deal with these matters. It may be that Winston is thinking of someone who, at present an Under Secretary, might develop sufficiently to act as Minister of State later on when the G.H.Q. of the new Command is established in Rangoon or wherever it may be. Anyhow, I am quite clear that, whether ex-Minister or civil servant, he must be directly under the Viceroy in his extra-statutory capacity. You may have seen from the telegrams that the phrase "personal capacity" may be liable to misunderstanding. It is, of course, not Linlithgow or Wavell as such, but the person who happens to be Viceroy in his extra-statutory capacity.

[1] L/WS/1/1272: ff 276–9.

2. You will also have seen the President's telegram[2] in which he accepts the idea of a Supreme Command, but, for reasons unknown to me, boggles at Sholto Douglas, and also raises questions about China and the Chinese troops working with Stilwell. I see no real difficulty about China itself, for the sphere of the South-East Asia Command clearly doesn't enter China and, owing to the limited capacity of the Burma Road at its best, could never carry on serious military operations into China. So far as concerns Chinese troops operating in Burma or elsewhere within the sphere of the South-East Asia Command, it seems to me that they come automatically under the Supreme Commander. What is more, I hope they will come under him directly and that we shall be able to avoid the position, which I fancy the Americans will try to sustain, that Chinese troops are a part of the American force, and that the Americans are entitled to a greater say on that account.

[Para. 3, on Field Marshal Wavell's personal staff, omitted.]

4. Meanwhile, what with Jinnah's rebuff to Gandhi,[3] the establishment of a League Government in the North-West, and the new appointments, it looks as if India had never been so quiet politically as it is at this moment. It may well be that Jinnah, with five Governments more or less looking to him, will now begin to take a broader view of the whole constitutional problem. It may be also that the public, now absorbed in questions of food and cost-of-living, will continue to think more in terms of present and future economic problems and that these may infuse a tinge of realism into politics as well. If only the big industrialists in India could realise that Congress has sufficiently served their purpose in the past by voting for their protective tariffs, and that their interest now lies in stable evolution and in a policy of industrial development.

After his management of the Gandhi letter affair I have hopes that he may pan out better than expected. But his curse is personal vanity which at his age he is not likely to shake off.

L.

[Para. 5, on Sir S. Runganadhan's domestic problems; and para. 6, on a proposed Red Cross Order, omitted.]

7. What about your own home-coming plans? Are you still thinking of a spell at Smuts' seaside place in Natal? I am not sure whether that would be as

[2] In his telegram 651 of 20 June (see No. 14, note 2) Mr Churchill informed Lord Linlithgow privately that he was contemplating an inter-allied Command in E. Asia with Sir Sholto Douglas as Supreme Commander, an American Deputy Supreme Commander, and, under them, three C.-in-C.s (one for each of the Services). In telegram 293 of 25 June to Mr Churchill, President Roosevelt agreed as to the desirability of a unified command with a British Commander but was not prepared to accept Sir Sholto Douglas. He pointed out certain problems such as the eleven divisions of Chinese troops largely controlled by General Stilwell and the fact that Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek was Supreme Commander in the China theatre of operations. L/PO/4/24: ff 760–4 and L/WS/1/1272: f 303.

[3] See Vol. III, No. 739, note 2.

pleasant in November and December, when Natal is hot and the rains begin, as it would have been in May and June. On the other hand, up-country, in the Transvaal, or in Northern Natal, it is very pleasant after the early rains, when everything is green and the nights cool.

But perhaps you may decide after all to come home directly and, if you must hide away from the press of things here in London, do so in Scotland, though you will not be free from a good many domestic problems even there.

All together, they won't trouble me as much as L. S. A.! Besides, Leo may be having a holiday by then!

L.

22

Field Marshal Wavell to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/PO/8/9g: f 5

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL INDIA OFFICE, *30 June 1943, 6 am*[1]

689. Your 266–S.C.[2]

Jenkins has accepted post of P.S.V. I understand Abell is willing to stay on as D.P.S.V. and should like him to do so. I believe Crosthwait's time is nearly up. Would like Indian as A.P.S.V. if really suitable one available, what is your view and could you suggest one.

[1] The date and time of despatch and telegram number have been taken from the India Office Outward Telegram Register for 1943.

[2] In his telegram 671 of 24 June, Field Marshal Wavell sought Lord Linlithgow's advice on the suitability of appointing Mr Evan Jenkins, Secretary of the Supply Department, as his P.S.V. since Mr Jenkins appeared 'to have considerable knowledge and experience and to be capable. I should judge him sympathetic to Indians and liberal minded but also practical and not sentimentalist.' Lord Linlithgow replied in telegram 266–S.C. of 25 June that he thought Mr Jenkins an admirable choice that could not be bettered. L/PO/8/9c and MSS. EUR. F. 125/25. See also Vol. III, No. 771.

23

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Field Marshal Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/9g: f 4

IMMEDIATE *2 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

1421–S. Following for Field Marshal Wavell. Many thanks for your telegram.[1] I am sure you could not improve on Jenkins as Private Secretary to Viceroy and

[1] No. 22.

Abell who will be very ready to stay on will make an admirable deputy Private Secretary to Viceroy.

2. Crosthwait's normal term would expire in February but all these posts are of course entirely at your disposal.

3. I have thought carefully over your suggestion of an Indian assistant Private Secretary to Viceroy, and have discussed privately with my own secretaries and one or two others competent to express a view. Decision is wholly for you, and if I feel hesitation I hope you will not let that influence you unduly. My own disposition would however, as you are kind enough to ask my advice, be to think that difficulty of getting the right man apart, it might be better to go slow. I doubt if you would get much thanks (though that I know is not in your mind) and if (as I suggest might be wiser given strain which might at times be felt by a member of major community, however well disposed, as a result of certain decisions that might have to be taken while relations with Congress and Gandhi remain what they are) you chose a Moslem, that might be read as indicative of your own sympathies etc. That would be equally true of Moslem attitude if you chose a Hindu. In short I have myself little doubt both communities would much prefer that communal question should not arise at level of Viceroy's staff. Your private secretariat staff handle all explosive matters, political, military, States, intercepts affecting prominent individuals in Indian life, correspondence in personal cypher with Prime Minister and Secretary of State (normally decyphered by assistant Private Secretary to Viceroy) and there are still further objections, which you will yourself be first to feel, to any discrimination between them as regards handling of material. Indeed I think that any attempt to establish compartments inside the office would break down in practice. My own view after 7½ years' experience is that a change (? of this) nature in lower grades would come better at a later stage in constitutional development, and if it were my own case, and I wanted to Indianise on this side of my staff, I would appoint an Indian Private Secretary to Viceroy rather than an Indian deputy or assistant. Nor I gather (unless you took a married man) would range of possibles be wide, while fact that Jenkins and Abell are both (? Punjabis) might make it difficult, without causing jealousies, to draw from a province which in the ordinary way would be (? more) likely than most to produce a reliable man if you were to decide on a Moslem.

4. My own frank advice would therefore be to (? wait) and perhaps consider again later in your Viceroyalty. It will cause neither surprise nor comment if you take on Crosthwait for balance of his term or replace him either then or in October by another Service European. To take on an Indian may annoy the communities from which choice has not been made; it would not in my judgment in present circumstances be in the best interests of the work; and it may

be difficult for you or your successor to revert to a European if experiment is not a success. But having said all that as frankly as you would wish me to, decision is solely yours, and if you still favour an Indian Assistant Private Secretary to the Viceroy (to take over I imagine in October) I will of course as requested make confidential enquiries and do my very best to discover the best man available.

24

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/9g: f 3

IMMEDIATE *2 July 1943*
VERY SECRET

1422–S. Wavell's telegram of June 30th 689[1] and my reply of to-day.[2] He must of course make up his own mind about this, and I would be last man to limit his freedom of choice, but as he has asked for my view I have felt bound to give it frankly. I hope very much however, for your own ear only, that you will be able to ride him off this suggestion. I do not believe that it will help him and I am rather afraid that it may land him in controversy. It is clearly impossible inside an office to debar a particular member of it, even though he may be junior of 3, from seeing certain papers. On the other hand Viceroy must know everything that is going on when he wants to and must see papers of whatever type. I daresay that it might be possible to find a suitable man (though it would not be easy). But my own feeling is that the risks are substantial and your own familiarity with line often taken in U telegrams and critical position we get when there is a case in which there is a difference of view with Cabinet; and very large quantity of intercepted correspondence from prominent politicians some of whom might even be relatives of an Indian Assistant P.S.V., which is collected by police here, might on occasion put a perfectly well-meaning and honest civil servant in an exceedingly awkward position. I should have thought myself that Wavell would do far better to wait until he had got well settled into his Viceroyalty, possibly replacing Crosthwait either in October (if he wishes an immediate change), or at the end of his normal term in February, by another European, and considering the possibility of an Indian A.P.S.V. at the end of new man's term. As I have said to Wavell I had very much rather have a senior experienced Indian officer (Trivedi is the type of man I have had in mind in the past) as P.S.V. than a less well balanced and experienced Indian officer as either D.P.S.V. or A.P.S.V. I have no racial feeling in the matter and

[1] No. 22. [2] No. 23.

am merely concerned with the best interests of the work and with protecting the highly confidential stuff which you and I and our successors have to handle.

2. There is one minor point which is just worth touching on and that is the difficulty we have had with the Foreign Office in the past about Indians and Foreign Office telegrams (to say nothing about Superintendent telegrams) though those telegrams will normally be of far less importance and less secret than the matter that normally has to be handled in my private office. But all this I repeat is for your own ear and if Wavell wants to go ahead I of course will do my best to help him. I need not say how relieved I am that he has appointed Jenkins and is retaining Abell. He will have a first class team and that is a great burden off my mind.

25

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *2 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 1423–S. I see that Sorensen[1] is making himself a nuisance about alleged non-publication of Gandhi's letter of September 23rd.[2] Full text was of course released here and, as I understand it, at home as Annexure three to the personal correspondence which I had with him at the beginning of the year.

2. There is of course not a word of condemnation of violence in the letter, and it seems to me rather unfair to you (and also to the Government of India) that we should let Sorensen get away with this. But you are best able to judge how to deal with it, and I imagine that Joyce's influence with the Press should be able to secure indirectly some recognition of the true facts. Letter of 23rd September was no more than a reiteration of Gandhi's previous and present claim that he is not responsible for the disorders that have happened or for the violence accompanying them. The answer to that is *securus judicat.*[3]

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 390, 24 June 1943, cols. 1300–1.

[2] Vol. II, No. 779. The date should be 21 September. The letter was appended to a communiqué issued by the Information Dept. of the India Office on 10 February 1943. L/P&J/8/623. It did not, however, appear in the report in *The Times* of 11 February.

[3] *Securus judicat orbis terrarum* (The verdict of the world is conclusive). St. Augustine, *Contra Litteras Parmeniani*, iii. 24.

26

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Herbert (Bengal)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *2 July 1943*

My dear Herbert,

Many thanks for your letter of 16th June[1] in which you discuss certain contingencies. I do not propose to go into the position in any very great detail and I should prefer to consider any situation as and when it starts to emerge. I am sure that you will give me the earliest possible notice of developments and keep me fully posted as to them, and as to the circumstances, so that I may be in a position to take a decision at short notice should that be necessary.

2. The answer to your specific question must of course to some extent depend on the circumstances at the time. But the margin is a very close one, and I fear that there is little consolation that I can give you. If the desiderata set out in the Instrument of Instructions are satisfied, and the Governor is satisfied that a particular individual has a stable majority, and in addition that he is prepared to support the war effort, I should not regard a Governor as having any option as to inviting him to assist in forming a Ministry. It might perfectly well be that after the Ministry has been formed the Chief Minister may act in such a manner as to justify the Governor, with the previous approval of the Governor-General and the Secretary of State—a previous approval which would only be given with the fullest knowledge of all the relevant factors and with full preliminary opportunity to consider them—to dismiss him. But such circumstances would be very rare indeed, and if they did occur a quite cast-iron case would necessarily have to be made out to satisfy the Governor-General, the Secretary of State and the Cabinet in the first instance, and thereafter public opinion both here and at home. The cases to which you refer do not really help. For your own information the issue was raised in connection with the dismissal of Allah Bakhsh,[2] but his dismissal would not have been regarded as by itself permanently debarring him from office at some later stage, though of course were there to have been any question of his being invited to assist the Governor in forming a Ministry, the Governor would have had to be satisfied as to the stability of his majority, &c., in accordance with the terms of the Instrument of Instructions, and also, so long as the war continued, as to his readiness to support the war effort. The same was very much the case with the instance which you quote of Reid. In that case there was no stable majority especially in connection with matters affecting the war effort.

[1] No. 6. [2] See Vol. III, No. 86, note 17.

3. I fear, therefore, that should your present Ministry fall (and I quite understand your reluctance to see further changes so long as your present Ministry retains a stable majority and is prepared to co-operate fully over the war effort) you would not be justified in my judgment in refusing to send for that individual whom, to use the wording of your Instrument of Instructions, you regarded as in your judgment "most likely to command a stable majority in the Legislature", &c. It must be for you to decide whether Huq, Mukerji, or any other potential Chief Minister who may appear to be emerging, in the first place has the stable majority required by the Instrument of Instructions, and in the second, is, if invited to assist you in forming a Ministry, prepared to give the fullest support to war effort. It is impossible for any one but the Governor himself to reach a clear conclusion on those matters. But as you know I shall expect, in the event of any change of Ministry or the like, to receive the fullest and most detailed information on both points, so that I could if necessary consult the Secretary of State before any decision of any sort was taken. And I should regard it as equally essential that I should be kept in the closest touch, by telegram if necessary, with all developments that may be likely to lead up to a constitutional Ministerial crisis in the Province. I felt, as you will forgive me for reminding you, at a serious disadvantage—a disadvantage to which the Secretary of State was also alive—in the case of the breakdown of last March, and it would certainly be necessary that I should be kept much more fully informed and much more betimes, were any corresponding Ministerial difficulties to be likely to emerge in the future. But I know that you are fully alive to that, and mention the point here merely to place it formally on record.

4. I am sorry not to give you a more encouraging reply; but you and I have been aware since last March that the possibility of difficulties of this order might have to be faced.

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW

27

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *2 July 1943*

Dear Linlithgow,
With the Food Conference about to open in Delhi next Monday,[1] I feel that I must invoke all my powers of description and persuasion to convey to you the seriousness of the food situation in Bengal. Hitherto I have studiously

avoided overstating the case and I have faithfully reported any day-to-day alleviation of the position: I am now in some doubt whether I have not erred in the direction of understatement.

2. Briefly, the Basic Plan[2] which emerged from our discussions when I visited you in Delhi, and which represented your Government's estimate of Bengal's absolute requirements and purported to represent the measure of willingness on the part of other Provinces to assist her, completely broke down; and Free Trade, which succeeded the Basic Plan, has never been permitted by the neighbouring Provinces to work effectively. The Basic Plan contemplated sending an agreed total of nearly 370,000 tons of rice to Bengal over a period of a year to be reckoned from December 1942. Actually, in the 7 months December 1942 to June 1943 only a little over 44,000 tons reached Bengal. I will not trouble you with details within these aggregate figures except to mention that the most glaring discrepancy is in the case of Bihar, whence 185,000 tons were promised and we have received only about 1,000 tons, but attach an extract[3] from my Departmental file.

3. It seems to me to be immaterial whether the Basic Plan or so-called Free Trade was in operation during these 7 months. The plain fact emerging from these figures is that Bengal's neighbours have disastrously failed to produce what was, not only assessed as within their capacity, but actually promised by them, and this in spite of repeated undertakings of co-operation on their part and very considerable persuasion and pressure from your Government.

4. To put it bluntly, my fear is that the Delhi conversations will produce a fresh crop of professions of goodwill and co-operation and that after they are over we shall simply be back where we were. I do not for a moment suggest that my colleagues in Bihar, Assam and Orissa, or their senior officials, or their Ministers as a whole, have been unresponsive to directions from the Centre or unsympathetic to the needs of Bengal. But we have been up against a dead-weight of opposition in these Provinces from the public, the politicians and, I fear, the district officials which has rendered Free Trade almost wholly inoperative.

5. The remedy, I am sure, is to abandon the attempt to rely on the goodwill of the various Provinces and on their direct assistance in administering the food-grains problem in this Regional Area: and for the Central Government itself to undertake that administration with Central officers at the head of the food administration in the various Provinces and a co-ordinating Central Executive

[1] The Third All-India Food Conference met on 5 July 1943. It emphatically rejected Free Trade between the Provinces and recommended that the Basic Plan should be continued with such adjustments of quotas as might be necessary. *Famine Inquiry Commission Report on Bengal* 'The Woodhead Report' (New Delhi, 1945), p. 51. See also No. 30, para. 8.

[2] See No. 13, note 7. [3] Not printed.

Officer over them with supreme authority throughout the area. You may think that I have somewhat of a "zonal" bee in my bonnet: but I do claim that my ideas have been already proved right several times over. The appointments of Elderton in connection with Railway Transport, Braund in connection with refugees and Gordon in connection with security arrangements all, I maintain, confirm my point. What is now in my view essential is a sort of Regional Dictator for foodgrains in this area with complete control in that sphere over the constituent Provinces and owing allegiance solely to the Centre. In this way only can Free Trade be expected to get a chance to operate. We have had Braund, it is true, and most helpful he has proved; but he has not been vested with the requisite executive authority to keep the situation in control.

6. Braund, as I see it, is the one man at present able to present an overall picture of the food situation in this area and personally I would rate the value of his appreciation and opinion very high. I hope that it may be possible for you to obtain from him at first-hand his impressions and conclusions.

7. The giving of a fair chance to Free Trade is, however desirable, the long-term policy. But, while Free trade develops—as I hope it will—Bengal is rapidly approaching starvation. The reports from the districts can only be described as alarming and unless we can get in foodgrains on something like the scale originally promised the law and order and the labour situation will get out of hand. Already my Ministry have been forced to consider measures of relief in the districts wholly beyond the capacity of Bengal to finance; and are perforce turning to the Central Government for financial assistance. Unless the food situation is taken in hand effectively—and, as I have explained, that can only be done by the Central Government—a position will be reached in which I cannot guarantee two indispensable requirements of the war effort, internal security and war production.

8. I would not like you to think that we have not been busy in Bengal setting our house in order. Our "food drive" in the district[s] has located nearly 100,000 tons of rice (in stocks of 400 maunds and over) in the Province. (That is not to say that it is all available for purchase and redistribution by Government, but it is *there*.) We are arranging shortly for a similar "drive" and food census in the Calcutta area and a scheme of rationing for Calcutta is nearly complete. Various methods for relief of distress are already in operation.

9. But the essential fact remains that we cannot keep Bengal fed (certainly we cannot assume the responsibility of rationing in Calcutta or elsewhere) unless we can get foodgrains into Bengal from outside at once pending the resuscitation by all means in our power of overall normal conditions.

10. I prefer to express no opinion on the question of Free Trade for the whole of India. I adhere to the view that this Regional Area ought to be self-supporting

in rice. But, at the moment, Bengal's essential requirement is an immediate and increased supply of foodgrains from outside; and, to put it crudely, we are not greatly concerned whether they come from this Regional Area or from outside it.

11. I am sorry to have to trouble you with so dismal a picture. I feel that at this crisis regrets and recriminations are out of place. I can assure you that we are doing our best within Bengal and I must pay Suhrawardy's energy and enthusiasm a high tribute. But we shall have to face disaster unless we can get foodgrains at once in sufficient quantities from outside and a resolute and powerful system of food administration (preferably by the Centre) over the entire Regional Area to bring the whole situation under control.

Yours sincerely,

J. A. HERBERT

I wonder how far he is right about the Bengal situation: about food in other Provinces.

L.

28

Mr. Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

SECRET AND PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *5 July 1943*

Since I wrote to you on June 28th[1] we have had a small Cabinet Committee revising Winston's draft memorandum on the question of the Supreme Command and have, I think, reduced it to proper shape. There is no question now of the "Assistant Minister" or whoever it might be being put in charge of Indian munitions factories and all that is said is that the Viceroy will, for his extra-statutory duties, have to be provided with an adequate staff. Whether any of that side of the business will come into being before you leave seems to me rather problematical. The new Supreme Commander, as well as the terms of his Command, have still to be agreed upon with the Americans, and when appointed I imagine there may be some weeks of planning and discussion here before he flies out.

2. The other feature of the memorandum which we have had altered is the suggestion that there should be a zone in Eastern India under the Supreme Commander. I was able to convince my colleagues, and I think Winston has accepted it, that the kind of conditions that imply a military zone, with military command of railways, &c., intervening between the ordinary civilian administration and the fighting front, do not apply to this case. It is out of the question,

[1] No. 21.

for instance, to take a section of the railways in Eastern India and separate them from the general control of transport. Nor is there any point—except in the eventuality of actual Japanese invasion—in superseding the ordinary machinery of law and order in Bengal and Assam. The military zone, in fact, in one sense only begins across the Burma border and on the roads between railhead and the border. On the other hand, there may well be aerodromes for long-range bombers well behind any zone that could be defined, while when operations develop the Supreme Commander may be embarking troops from ports all over India. Accordingly, my view prevailed that there should be no special zone, but simply that the operational requirements of the Supreme Commander should be met by arrangement between himself and the authorities of the Government of India, primarily, no doubt, with the Commander-in-Chief.

3. This will no doubt involve a good many detailed issue[s] and also possibilities of friction unless both sides are genuinely anxious to do all in their power to help each other. I am sure Auchinleck can be relied upon to play up in the right spirit on all these questions and to accept the fact that he is once again in effect in the same position as he was two years ago when he helped so promptly with every request from the Middle East,[2] and that the fact that the Supreme Commander may be at the outset next door to him at Delhi, or later in Calcutta and eventually Rangoon, should not affect the essence of the relationship. I can quite understand his initial view, shared by yourself,[3] about the present border and Arakan operations, but I hope that he has by now realised that while he naturally carries on for the time being, there is much to be said for those who are in charge of the future major operations also taking over control of the preparatory work. My own view, for instance, is that the Wingate method on a greatly developed scale is going to be the solution, not only of Upper Burma, but of South-East Asia generally. The earlier, consequently, the new Supreme Command is in touch with Wingate and his methods of training, the better.

4. In paragraph 5 of your letter of the 19th[4] you mention Auchinleck's expressing sympathy with the idea of the Commander-in-Chief being outside the Council. My own view is that eventually the right military organisation for India will be on continental lines, i.e. with a Defence Ministry entirely separate from a great General Staff under a Commander-in-Chief. That would enable an Indian Minister to take complete control of the administrative machine for raising and equipping Indian forces, but on the other hand would leave the Chief Command and training (by treaty arrangement) in the hands of experienced senior British officers until such time as Indian senior officers capable of holding these positions had grown up. When that time comes there will no doubt be much to be said for the Commander-in-Chief not being actually a member of the Council, but only attending it, as the C.I.G.S. does here, in order to lay his expert views before an Indian Cabinet. All this is, however,

definitely premature at this moment. So long as the war is on it is essential that the Commander-in-Chief should be a member of the Council and I doubt very much whether there is good ground for transferring to the Defence Minister any of the functions so far retained under the War Department. Anyhow, as you have rightly pointed out to him, this is a matter, not for the individual predilection of a Commander-in-Chief, but for the Viceroy and for the War Cabinet at home. I do in this, as in all other matters, hope that Wavell and Auchinleck will see eye to eye and work intimately together. Their combination can be as powerful for good as any friction between them could have the most mischievous effects.

5. That brings me to the wider question of Indianisation generally. I was glad to have so clear an exposition of your views about the succession to Raisman and Maxwell in your letter of June 21st,[5] and your suggestion of Twynam as a possible Home Member. There is much force in the view that Wavell will need Raisman's experienced assistance and may also be glad of a European in the Home Membership and I shall of course put the point to Wavell. On the other hand it seems to me a little too early to reach definite conclusions and I should not like to form a final judgment—nor would it really be right for me to do so—until Wavell has had a few months to look round and find his feet and has given his own more mature views.

[Para. 6, on commercial treaty negotiations with China, omitted.]

7. I am looking into the question of your journey home.[6] You certainly have a case for sympathetic consideration in this matter and I shall do what I can to help over it. As I rather expected, you have given up the idea of a rest on the Natal coast, and will try and get such rest as you can here at home.

[2] General Auchinleck had been C.-in-C. India, January–July 1941.
[3] See No. 13, para. 4. [4] No. 13. [5] *Ibid.*
[6] In para. 13 of his letter of 19/21 June (omitted from No. 13) Lord Linlithgow raised the possibility that he and his family might be given free air passages home in consideration of expenses he had incurred through the extensions to his Viceroyalty. MSS. EUR. F. 125/12.

29

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Colville (Bombay)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/57

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *5 July 1943*

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL

My dear Colville,

Twynam has referred once or twice in his fortnightly letters to me[1] to rumours that Gandhi might decide to mark the twelve months' anniversary of his incarceration by a fast to death or by some corresponding move. I have had no information to confirm these rumours, and I am much inclined myself to think that they merely represent a natural calculation that the Mahatma may regard the completion of his first year's incarceration as a suitable moment for a move, just as the fast of last February was timed to begin on the completion of six months in detention. Nor has any correspondence that I have seen from him lately suggested the possibility of an early move on his part. But it is of much importance to be prepared, and I think we should do well to review the situation; and since your assumption of office was subsequent to the last series of incidents with Gandhi I imagine that you in particular may have points to raise in connection with the possible handling of another fast.

2. There are two main points; the first, what line we are to take about a fast if there is one: the second, what should be done about publicity?

3. On these matters I of course must have the Cabinet with me, and I must to some extent be certain of the support of my Council, which it would be my objective as in the past to carry unanimously. But subject to any new and unexpected factor emerging my own clear conclusion remains, as it did in the early part of this year, that if Gandhi decides to fast, he should be allowed to do so, even if the consequences are fatal. I am very sceptical myself as to his wanting to die; but if he does want to die and undertakes a *real* fast, without water, &c., I should not expect him to last more than 4 or 5 days. On the other hand, if he adopts the same sort of diet, &c. as he did on the last occasion, he may quite well last for some time; but in that event so long as we are quite clear in our minds that we do not intend to let him go, whatever happens, and as on the last occasion have made our position clear, I should expect the public to anticipate our standing firm, and a good deal of the publicity and propaganda value of a fast, similar to that undertaken in February, to have been dissipated by the course and the outcome of the February fast.

4. The question of publicity is a difficult one. The alternatives of course are, if the old man fasts, (*a*) to maintain a complete and rigorous silence until the

fast has ended fatally, or is about to end fatally. It might be necessary in that connection to consider moving him to some place where the risks of premature publicity would be less, and I discuss that possibility later in this letter. (*b*) To take very much the line we took in February: in other words, to let the fact of the fast be known as soon as, or shortly before, it begins (and the circumstances from which it emerged); to allow reasonable comment in the press; but to damp down any excessive writing up of Gandhi, or of the fast, so far as outward messages, or messages intended for internal consumption originally from correspondents in India were concerned, and similarly to keep a pretty close hand on inward messages whether from the U.K. or the United States. We were a good deal criticised, both from home and out here, on the occasion of the last fast, on the ground that, particularly in the opening days, the publicity arrangements which were then made were not sufficient to prevent Congress and Gandhi advertising themselves to a most undesirable degree, and I have had many suggestions, both then and since, that in the event of a further "Fast to death" or the like, it would be better to take a stiffer line, and if possible to close down publicity altogether.

5. My mind is open, but my judgment at this stage, in the light of some experience of this sort of business, is that while in principle there is an immense amount to be said for complete secrecy until the fatal event has occurred, or is about to occur, there is also a great deal to be said on the other side. I quite admit that the more publicity we allow, the greater the propaganda advantage to Gandhi and the Congress. I agree also that, in the light of our experience last February, which taught us some useful lessons in this respect, we may need to apply a somewhat stricter control over certain sources or channels of publicity than we then did. But once the news of the fast gets out (and it is not too easy to be entirely certain, however anxious we might be to keep it secret, that it will not get out in any circumstances, for we might have to send for particular doctors, &c.) I am strongly inclined to think that such a crop of rumours, and so much public agitation, will develop, that we should be driven to publicity. And if that is so, I would myself incline to think that publicity from the outset would be wisest, the situation being dealt with by bulletins such as we issued last time, coupled with controlled press comment, possibly on a somewhat more restricted scale than was permitted in the early spring of this year. We have to bear in mind also that a public which (as in February and March) has had its nerves strung up by indications of the approaching demise of the Mahatma, and then finds that the old man has emerged from his fast rather

[1] In his letter of 17 April, Sir H. Twynam forwarded information from Dr Khare that Gandhi was considering a fast to death sometime in August which might be accompanied by marches on the Viceroy's House and Government Houses where the protesters would await death by starvation, poison or bullets. In a letter of 10 June, he reported that certain workers were being asked to volunteer to fast simultaneously with Gandhi. MSS. EUR. F. 125/64.

better than he went into it, is an asset to us to some extent. Nor can we overlook the effect on an entirely unprepared public opinion here, and possibly in the United Kingdom and in the United States, of the news that Gandhi after a fast of several days, of which no warning had been given to the public, was on the point of death, or that he had actually died. Inevitably in such circumstances I would expect allegations of ill-treatment or lack of proper attention; suggestions that no opportunity had been given to either the professional medical man, or to persons who could bring pressure to bear upon him for political or other reasons, to try to save his life; that his family had been treated with lack of consideration; that he was a martyr; that we were executioners, &c. We shall in any event if Gandhi dies on our hands have to face a good deal of undeserved abuse. And were the decision of policy to be that we were to keep his fast secret until it was about to end, or had ended, fatally we should of course have to be prepared to face an intensification of such abuse on the lines I have just indicated. But we should in my opinion be in a weaker position to deal with it, and should have exposed ourselves further to damaging propaganda, and risked increasing still further any bitterness that Gandhi's demise as a prisoner might in any event generate, were we to keep the position secret till the last moment.

6. If Gandhi were to fast, and we were to decide to keep the fact of his fast secret until the last moment, or were we, whatever our decision about publicity, to feel that he could better be dealt with while fasting in some place other than the Aga Khan's Palace, one possibility would be to move him, once his intention to fast had been declared, to Ahmednagar; affording him of course every comfort, and every medical assistance practicable, there, and allowing him to take his entourage with him. If the geography of the Fort would suit such a plan (and on that I would welcome your advice) there would clearly be advantage in detaining him in seclusion from the Working Committee until the last stage was reached. If he died, the Working Committee, who are interned there, would be able to attend his funeral, &c., and that would help us over what might be a troublesome business, viz., the funeral and the disposal of the ashes. I should welcome your comment on this as indeed on the whole question. I am under the impression at the same time that Gandhi's fast in the Aga Khan's Palace caused us no particular inconvenience that had not been foreseen, and that we might not have to face at Ahmednagar or elsewhere; and that in particular it attracted on the last occasion singularly little local attention, and that there were none of the crowds waiting for bulletins outside the gates, or trying to look through railings, or the like, with the possible connected law and order problems, which we had thought likely. Nor can we overlook the fact that Gandhi dying as a prisoner in a mediæval fortress surrounded by a moat, however comfortable in fact that fortress might be, and however complete the attractions with which he was surrounded, may be better propaganda for Congress (and

the presence under the same roof of Nehru and the Working Committee would mean that at some time in the future grossly exaggerated accounts derived from them would be given publicity), than Gandhi dying in the luxurious surroundings of the Aga Khan's Palace, the comfort of which has definitely been a propaganda point for us so far.

7. I shall greatly welcome your view on the whole issue. I hope that we may not have to face up to it. But as past experience has shown, it will be well to be fully prepared in advance in case we have to. I would propose to send a copy of my present letter, or the appropriate extracts from it, as a most secret paper, to other Governors, and ask them for their reactions on the two specific issues of—

(*a*) standing firm in the event of a fast, subject of course to its circumstances,
(*b*) publicity.

That will materially help me in framing any contingent report to the Secretary of State and the Cabinet. It will tend also to get everyone into line.

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW

30

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr. Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *5 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have no letter from you to answer though I hope I may hear from you shortly. It is slightly provoking that while our letters home seem of late to have been taking only about a week or so by the bag, letters out still take anything up to three weeks, though there are occasional exceptions. But it makes all the difference to be able to work to these shorter schedules, and I dare say that when the business of tidying up in North Africa has advanced a little further there will be a corresponding improvement so far as outward mails are concerned.

2. There is nothing very much to report or to comment on. The Viceregal appointment and Auchinleck's appointment continue to have a good press, and my earlier impression that Wavell could look to take over in a good and friendly atmosphere is confirmed by the way things have since been going. Auchinleck equally has been a great success from the first, and leaves on one the impression of having settled down now and found his feet again.

3. I need not say how very glad indeed I was to hear of Wavell's decision to appoint Jenkins.[1] Jenkins' experience, his balance and his personal qualities are exactly what are wanted for this very important post, and I am sure that he will be all the help in the world to the new Viceroy. Equally, as Deputy, Abell has had the advantage of a year or so with B. J. Glancy as Governor's Secretary, and as you know in filching him from Glancy earlier this year I had very much in mind the importance of giving the new Viceroy, and the new P.S.V., whoever he might be, a good man with broad general experience and with the requisite seniority to help in the carry-over. I have telegraphed to you about the Assistant Private Secretary's post[2] and look forward with interest to Wavell's reaction, though I quite accept that Crosthwait will of course have completed the great bulk of his normal term in any event by the time the change-over is due to occur.

4. While we are on these matters, I had already raised with you the question of air passages for my wife and family[3] but I thought it well to telegraph to you today[4] about arrangements in case, the uncertainties of war being what they are, we should finally decide to go by sea rather than by air. I realise that the period of warning is not very long. But it is most desirable that the outgoing Viceroy and his Staff and belongings should be out of the country once the Viceregal term is at an end, and I hope that on this also you will be able to help me.

5. There have been references in recent letters[5] from Twynam to rumours in the Central Provinces that Gandhi might be meditating a further fast to take effect on the 12 months anniversary of his being placed under restraint. I think myself that this is much more likely to be speculation based on the anticipation that the Mahatma will not let the anniversary pass entirely unmarked than anything else, and I have no reason to believe that there has been any leakage, or any means by which he could have indicated his intentions to the outside world. If in fact he had said anything of this sort or given any warning that he had this sort of idea in mind to those of his family or his friends who were in touch with him during the concluding period of, or immediately after, his fast earlier this year, I should have expected by now to have had some indication that that was the case. But I have in fact had no such indication. I think therefore that it is probably largely speculation. But it does not of course follow that the idea may not enter the Mahatma's mind, or commend itself to him; and it is essential in this sort of business to be prepared, and to have thought out the main questions that call for settlement as far in advance as possible. I therefore thought it well to send a general reference[6] to Colville, of which a copy goes to you by this bag, and a copy of which will go to other Governors under a personal and secret letter from me, asking for their views, once Colville has been able to receive the original. My mind is perfectly open pending Colville's comments

and those of other Governors. Subject always to the circumstances, which might make a difference (though I would not in fact expect them to do so in the present case), I am clear that we must stand firm as we did early this year if the old man threatens us with a fast to death or the like. As regards publicity, I have done my best to set out the arguments for and against publicity, and also for and against dealing with Gandhi in the Aga Khan's Palace in preference to some other place such as the Fort at Ahmednagar, as objectively as I can in my letter to Colville. But my own instinct is that it would be better to face the publicity from the beginning, and very much on the broad general lines that we adopted in the early spring. Apart from the other arguments for that course, which I have tried to set out in my letter to Colville, we have to bear in mind the extreme strain under which certain at any rate of the Members of my Council, whom I could not hope to keep out of the secret, might find themselves with the knowledge that Gandhi had taken on a fast that might prove fatal and that the public were completely ignorant of it. If any comments suggest themselves to you when you have seen my letter I need not say how welcome they should be. Let me only add that I have, as you may imagine, not the slightest desire to have to deal with another fast before I leave India, and that I shall be quite prepared, with entire easiness of mind, to leave over the next experiment in this technique for the consideration of my successor!

[Para. 6, on the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, omitted.]

7. I have just concluded another session of the National Defence Council—the last but one over which I shall preside, the next session being in the opening days of September. It was well attended and showed the same keen (almost too keen) interest in public affairs and in the business that came before it as it has done consistently since its inauguration. As an experiment I would judge it now, after two years experience, to have been very successful, and apart from its general value as a sounding board it has given us the only instrument which has brought British India and the Princes together. I took the opportunity of this session to get Raisman to meet the Princes who were attending this session and Ministers, and discuss with them at considerable length (with myself in the chair) the problem of inflation and the help which the States could give themselves in connection with it. That was very well taken, and the discussion I think definitely successful.

8. Food continues to be our major problem. I opened today a largely attended conference to deal with short-term policy.[7] All the Provinces and the more important States are represented, and I hope that some little advance may in the

[1] No. 22. [2] Nos. 23 and 24. [3] See No. 28, note 6.
[4] No. 1431–S of 5 July. L/PO/8/8b. [5] See No. 29, note 1. [6] No. 29.
[7] See No. 27, note 1.

outcome be registered. I send you by this bag copy of my speech, which I am not publishing; you will see that it is short and to the point. But it endeavoured to bring out that we are all of us wandering a good deal in the dark and buying our experience; that we are likely to go on doing so for a considerable time to come; but that we have got to stand together, and the rich to help the poor. The last doctrine is less popular with the rich than one might expect in this matter of food! Nor can we quite overlook that in the Parliamentary Provinces the landlord interest is pretty strong. But the merit of this conference (as of the conference on long-term policy which I have in view for a little later in the summer) is that it brings these conflicting interests together round the table and forces them to listen and to give consideration to one another's points of view.

9. I hope all is going well about the East Asia Command. I did not think Winston's telegram No. 676[8] of 26th June too encouraging, and I have no doubt that the Americans will drive a pretty hard bargain with us. I am not deeply impressed by the argument about Chiang Kai-shek, and it would be intolerable to have a Chinese to run this business. I shall be surprised (though I shall refrain from saying "I have told you so") if the triumvirate solution, which I have unsuccessfully pressed, does not look a little more attractive as time passes, and the difficulties arising out of international jealousies, &c. in connection with a Supreme Commander-in-Chief become a little clearer.

10. I have discussed in some detail with Auchinleck your telegram No. 661[9] of 22nd June and the connected correspondence, about the strength at which the Indian Army should be maintained. I do not think I am yet in a position to let you have a firm and final reply, since obviously everything turns (or at any rate a great deal) on the decisions in other fields. But he advises me that to meet the commitments laid upon us for operations at present being planned we have only the minimum strength of field army formations required and that no reduction of field army divisions, beyond the proposal to convert two of them into training divisions, is therefore possible. He advises further that the forces at present allotted to internal security, and to the defence of the North-West Frontier, have already been reduced to the lowest strength which he considers acceptable in present conditions. There are still four infantry divisions and one armoured division in the Middle East and Persia-Iraq Commands, and a large number of ancillary units. So long as these forces remain overseas their strength cannot be reduced. After fulfilling all the above the general reserve left in India comprises only one armoured division, one infantry division, one Tank Brigade and five armoured car regiments. Auchinleck does not think that this can be further reduced. He is, he tells me, now trying to stabilise the strength of the Indian Army: but he comments that in spite of the conversion of two divisions of the field army to training divisions, there is constant need to meet new and unforeseen demands for base and other ancillary units. His general conclusion

at this stage is that so long as his commitments remain as at present, no further reductions in the Indian Army are possible.

[Para. 11, on the Khaksar position, omitted.]

12. As you know I have always had a high opinion of Aney. I was sorry to lose him in February, for I regarded him as a sincere and honourable man, who had displayed both uprightness and strength of character during the time that he was on my Council.[10] And he was the only one of the three whom I would have regarded as really resigning because of conviction on the point of principle. I have been anxious to do what I could to get him back into public life, and an opportunity has now afforded itself of using him as our Agent in Ceylon. To my satisfaction he has accepted this post, and if, as I trust, no difficulty arises with the Ceylon Government about acceptance of him, this appointment will serve the double purpose of giving us in that controversial island someone very well seen by nationalist opinion here, and at the same time bringing back to public service a man entirely trustworthy and straightforward.

13. I sent you, in Laithwaite's letter to Turnbull of the 28th June,[11] copy of an article in the *Statesman* of 28th June by their Muslim correspondent, on reactions to Wavell's appointment. I thought it a good article as analysing what they rightly call "Indian nationalist reactions", and as bringing out definitely the present Muslim attitude.

[Para. 14, on correspondence with Mr. Horace Alexander, omitted.]

6 July 1943

15. I mentioned in my letter of the 22nd June[12] Herbert's request in his letter of the 16th June[13] for advice where he would stand in the event of the fall of Nazimuddin. By this bag I send you a copy of my reply.[14] I do not think there is anything in it with which you will disagree, but if you have any misgivings or comment, perhaps you would telegraph. His differences with Huq have, since I wrote to him, taken a further and more aggravated turn, for I see from today's paper[15] (I send you a copy of the relevant extract by the bag) that Huq is now conducting a root and branch attack on Herbert over his handling of the March crisis and his administration of the Province generally. Huq does not

8 Repeating telegram 293 of 25 June from President Roosevelt to Mr Churchill. See No. 21, note 2.
9 See No. 18, note 10. 10 See Vol. III, No. 476, etc. 11 MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.
12 No. 18, para. 21. 13 No. 6. 14 No. 26.
15 The *Statesman* of 6 July carried a statement made in the Bengal Legislative Assembly the previous day by Mr Fazlul Huq in which he charged Sir J. Herbert with partisanship and violation of his Instrument of Instructions. He alleged that the Governor had rarely listened to his objections to the arrests and imposition of collective fines the previous year; described 'the circumstances under which Sir John Herbert managed to secure my signature on that fraudulent document called my letter of resignation'; and accused him of stooping to canvass support for Sir Nazimuddin's Cabinet once he had decided on Mr Huq's own resignation. L/P&J/8/651.

come well out of it—indeed it is obvious that it would be exceedingly difficult for any partnership to subsist in the light of public abuse and misrepresentation such as that which Huq has now indulged in. Let us hope that Nazimuddin is able to keep things together.

16. When I saw in the Press yesterday that Madame Chiang had returned by air to China I wondered whether she had again been "smuggled" through India without a word to anyone as on the previous occasion.[16] I had a word last night with General Bissell. He told me that in fact she had landed at Karachi and that he had had short notice instructions to prepare for her landing at Calcutta, though she did *not* land there, and he thought she had flown direct to Gaya and refilled there. I must say that I think after all that has passed it is quite outrageous that these people should continue to behave in this manner, and I am instructing the External Affairs Department to take the matter up officially again with a view to renewing our protests to the Americans and to the Chinese. We should indeed have every justification, in my opinion, for using the word "smuggling" to which the Chinese took such exception on the last occasion. The more I see of this Chinese way of doing business the more certain I am that a pretty firm hand with them, and no undue tenderness for their feelings or undue readiness to take them at their own valuation, is going to be the only way out.

16 On 19/20 November 1942, after the Indian provincial authorities had been given only a few hours' notice, Madame Chiang Kai-shek and a party of eight had been flown across India *en route* for the United States by the U.S.A.F. The Government of India's views on the incident were conveyed to the Chinese via the U.S. Embassy in Chungking after a conversation in New Delhi between Mr G. R. Merrell and Mr O. Caroe in which the latter was alleged to have said that the 'smuggling of Madame Chiang Kai-shek through India without the knowledge of the Government of India was an unfriendly act'. The Chinese Foreign Minister subsequently objected to these comments and Mr Caroe denied having made them. MSS. EUR. F. 125/23 and L/P&S/12/783.

31

Sir J. Colville (Bombay) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/57

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL GOVT. HOUSE, GANESHKHIND, *9 July 1943*

D.–o. No. 5

My dear Linlithgow,

Thank you for your most secret and personal letter of July the 5th[1] about the possibility of Gandhi fasting again to mark the twelve months' anniversary of his detention. We have no information here to suggest that this is imminent, and I am inclined to think that he will reflect that his last "fast to capacity" fell flat, that a fast to death would, to say the least of it, deprive him of the oppor-

tunity of trying his hand on the next Viceroy, and that he will therefore not undertake it. However, one cannot be sure, and it is possible that he may not be able to resist the temptation to adopt this method of bringing himself into prominence and of protesting against allegations which he feels are unfairly made against him.

2. You ask for my views on two main points—firstly, what line should be taken about the fast if there is one, and secondly, what should be done about publicity?

On the first point, I am quite clear in mind that there is no other course but to stand firm. In view of what happened in February, any other course would be a great surprise to the public and would be taken as a sign of weakness, which would offset almost everything that has been done to bring the subversive activities of Congress under control. In saying this, I do not minimise the trouble we should have to meet if he died, but I think we should weather that successfully. The graver consideration, that he would be regarded by many as a martyr, has already been fully considered and faced.

On the second point, I think we should take much the same line as regards publicity as was taken in February, though it should be possible to damp down to a greater degree sensational writing-up of the event. I do not think it would be possible to keep the fast a secret for longer than a day or two, when rumours would fly about and we should be called upon to make a statement, which would put us in a far worse position than if a frank attitude had been adopted. As regards location, while I should certainly not grieve if you remove the old gentleman out of this Province, I do not think there would be any advantage in moving him from the Aga Khan's Palace to the Fort at Ahmednagar. For one thing, the geography of the Fort would make it impossible to detain him in real seclusion from the Working Committee, and there would be a tremendous hullabaloo about taking him from what is now admitted to be the exceptional comfort of the Aga Khan's Palace to cast him into a Fort. We cannot, of course, be certain that the Aga Khan's Palace, situated where it is, might not attract crowds; but that seems unlikely, as it was not the case on the last occasion. From the point of view of administration, including medical attention, Poona is undoubtedly the best place.

I am aware of the views put forward by Roger Lumley on the last occasion,[2] in which I know that he had the unanimous support of his Advisers and principal officers. I have not thought it wise to enlarge the circle of consultation, and have discussed your letter with two people only—Bristow, Adviser in charge of the Home Department, and Irwin, both of whom feel that the situation has materially changed in view of the results of February's fast, and are in agreement with me.

[1] No. 29. [2] See Vol. III, Nos. 111, 143, 376, 382, 393, 473 and 560.

3. I note that you are sending a copy of your letter to me to the other Governors, and I shall be very interested if, in due course, you are able to tell me your final decision.

Yours sincerely,
JOHN COLVILLE

32

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

SECRET AND PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *9 July 1943*

Strakosch is back from Washington and I have had a long talk with him about the danger of inflation. He feels that Raisman, to whom he spoke about the matter last year, has not been sufficiently alive to the danger of inflation coming with a rush. The main remedy to his mind is evidently the sale of gold. In this connection he feels that the Treasury are unjustified in pocketing the whole difference between the Indian price and the London price themselves. On that point there is, of course, the counter fact that the Treasury are paying for great quantities of Indian products, also at enhanced prices, and the proceeds of the sale of gold will go towards defraying a part of these high costs. I doubt very much if they would be prepared to take less than the Indian price, and I am not sure that one way and another, what with the risk of loss in transit and other considerations, there will be very much in the way of "profit" for the Treasury. But of course from the immediate point of view of creating a deflationary tendency, it does not matter who gets whatever profit there may be out of the transaction, so long as surplus Indian currency is drawn off the market.

2. As regards silver, Strakosch doubts whether, supposing the legislation now before the Senate passes, more than 100,000,000 ounces are likely to be released, i.e. only a fifth of the "mass of manœuvre"[1] which you have suggested. This view is also that of Phillips, who advised independently that we might get 100 million ounces if the Americans could be convinced that the cause is good, but that a request for 500 million ounces would frighten them out of their wits. Strakosch thinks it should be quite possible to convince the Americans that it is necessary to let India have enough silver to keep silver coinage in circulation (for this the 100 million might without great difficulty be shown to be a suitable figure to work to), as this is very much in their own interests in view of the presence of American troops and Air Forces in India. It looks, however, as if Kisch will have a very difficult task in persuading not only the U.S. Government but also the Silver Senators—who I gather are disposed to take a short and narrow view—that, on a long view, they would be wise to let India have a

further large amount for use as a "mass of manœuvre", and he may find it politic to begin by putting forward a limited request based on the immediate necessities. He is however experienced and skilful in such negotiations and we must leave it to his judgment how to handle the matter.

3. Discussing other deflationary measures, Strakosch thought that the situation was so grave that it might be well worth while risking a higher loan interest. When I suggested that possibly the best way of getting loan money in quickly might be a lottery loan with prize drawings every quarter, I found him, to my surprise, entirely in agreement. The suggestion had in fact been made to him by Harry White of the American Treasury and had appealed to him. If I remember rightly, it is nearly three years ago that I made that suggestion, which at the time I believe you thought dangerously heretical. I believe it is well worth while considering now. However, we are going to have further talks in the office about all this and I shall no doubt be telegraphing or writing to you more fully and this is only a preliminary warning of what is in my mind.

[Paras. 4 and 5, on the Secretary of State's Advisers; and para. 6, on Mr. Amery's talk to the American Outpost in London, omitted.]

P.S.V.—

This, as S./S. says, is only a preliminary warning. I regard myself as easily capable of conducting a correspondence upon this and kindred questions. But I very much doubt the usefulness of doing so, e.g., this letter would have to be edited before I could show it to Raisman. Whatever value I may put upon my own or Amery's judgment in matters of high finance and currency, political economy, &c., both he and I must rest upon our expert adviser. A bare acknowledgment will suffice, and this can be included in next Tuesday's P. & P.

L.,—28.7.43.

[1] See tel. 4611 of 10 June from G. of I., Finance Dept. to Secretary of State. L/F/7/448: f 50.

33

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Herbert (Bengal)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *11 July 1943*

My dear Herbert,

Many thanks for your letter of the 2nd July,[1] about the food position. I quite realise your anxieties. You will by now have had the full report of how things went in the Conference. I dare say that Bengal could have wished that in certain respects the outcome of the Conference had been rather different. But there was

[1] No. 27.

no question as to the general feeling or as to the case for the conclusions that were finally reached.

2. I gather, on paragraph 8 of your letter, that your food drive has located, in fact, 155,000 tons, of rice, in stocks of 400 maunds or over, and taking into account only 25 per cent. of stocks that is a very satisfactory result, and shows how much is in fact available. I think you have set an excellent example to other Provinces, and I have not failed to impress upon them, as opportunity has afforded itself, the importance of a similar drive. I hope you will have as good results in the Calcutta area, and look forward with much interest to its outcome.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

34

Mr Jenkins to Sir G. Laithwaite

MSS. EUR. F. 125/138

PERSONAL INDIA OFFICE, *12 July 1943*

My dear Laithwaite,

The Field Marshal has asked me to send you the enclosed copy of a note of a discussion which took place on 9th July 1943, between him, the Secretary of State and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar. He has noted that before I was called in Sir Ramaswami had said that "he did not think there was any chance that Gandhi and Congress would retract the August resolution, but that there was considerable revolt inside Congress against Gandhi's unfruitful leadership".

2. The Field Marshal was naturally entirely non-committal. He thinks that His Excellency should be aware of the discussion in case Sir Ramaswami raises any of the points again on arrival in India. The India Office have shown me various files bearing on points (1), (2) and (3), so we are not ignorant of His Excellency's views.

Yours sincerely,

E. M. JENKINS

Enclosure to No. 34

A discussion took place at 11.30 A.M. on the 9th July in the Secretary of State's room at the India Office between the Secretary of State, the Viceroy-designate and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar on certain matters to which Sir Ramaswami wished to draw attention before his departure for India. P.S.V. designate was present.

1. *Planning for constitutional reform.*—Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said that he thought it important that the honesty of His Majesty's Government's intentions

with regard to constitutional reform should be kept prominently before the Indian public. After ten months' stay in England he was in no doubt about the attitude of His Majesty's Government and the Secretary of State, but there was still considerable suspicion in India. He thought that the Government of India should encourage and if necessary promote an enquiry into the nature of the new Constitution. If leading men were prepared to undertake an enquiry the Government of India might well give them such Secretariat assistance as they required. He appreciated all the difficulties; for example it would undoubtedly be argued that an enquiry would be meaningless with the Congress leaders in detention, and it might not be easy to secure the support of the communal leaders. At the same time he was convinced that an attempt should be made.

The Secretary of State said that in South Africa the constructive lead had been taken by private individuals whose ideas had later been adopted by the politicians. He understood that Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar had something of this kind in mind, and agreed that if leading men were prepared to undertake an enquiry the Government of India might well assist them by providing a suitable staff and making information available. He was thinking not of politicians but of men of recognised authority in constitution[al] matters such as University Professors or Judges. He asked whether Sir Ramaswami had in mind a general invitation and, if such an invitation failed, whether the nucleus of a suitable body could be formed by the appointment of the Chief Justice of India either by himself or with the Judges of the Federal Court.

Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said that he was thinking of a general invitation through the Press. If such an invitation were unsuccessful he would fall back upon the appointment of a suitable body by Government.

The Viceroy-designate said that in his opinion a general invitation would be unsuitable and that if Government were to promote an enquiry it would be necessary to nominate the members of a suitable body to undertake it. The Secretary of State said that if a general invitation was held to be unsuitable, personal invitations to take part might in the first instance be sent to half a dozen leading men. If this approach failed the Government of India could nominate suitable persons with powers to co-opt. The idea would of course be to examine the various constitutional possibilities including Pakistan. An academic examination of this kind might be very valuable.

2. *Changes in Executive Council.*—Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said that he and his colleagues in the Executive Council had felt that the reservation of the Home and Finance Departments to officials deprived the non-official Members of some at least of the influence which they could legitimately expect to exercise, and this opinion was shared by the Indian public. The important distinction was between non-officials and officials rather than between Indians and Europeans. The issue was bound to arise on the retirement of Sir Reginald Maxwell, the

present Home Member, and he thought that the replacement of the Home and Finance Members by non-officials required very serious consideration. If it was desired to retain the present official element in the Executive Council, the officials might perhaps hold other portfolios.

The Secretary of State said that this was a matter on which a new Viceroy could not be expected to express an opinion until he had studied the working of the Council for some time. Indeed, this comment applied to all the matters under discussion.

3. *The possibility of establishing Executive Councils in Section 93 Provinces.*—Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said that Section 93 arrangements had already been in force for periods longer than the Government of India Act, 1935, contemplated. The Advisers to the Governors were officials and were out of touch with public opinion. The [He] thought there should be a reversion to the old arrangement under which the Heads of Provinces were assisted by Executive Councils. An Executive Council of non-officials would be in touch with public opinion and would be of considerable assistance to the Governor.

The Secretary of State pointed out that this was one of the matters discussed in some detail by the Viceroy's Executive Council in August 1942.[1] The change proposed by Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar would involve legislation by Parliament, but the difficulties of this would not be insuperable.

4. *The status of the Agent-General in the United States.*—Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar said that in his view the Agent-General in Washington should have the full status of a Minister and should be independent of the British Embassy. This change would have a good effect on American opinion though it was less important from the Indian point of view.

The Secretary of State agreed that the change might have advantages, but thought that in India it would be recognised that whatever the nominal status of the Agent-General might be Indian foreign policy would still in the last resort be controlled from London.

5. *Exchange of High Commissioners between India on the one hand and Canada and Australia on the other.*—The Secretary of State said he understood Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar wished to raise this point. Sir Ramaswami said that he thought an exchange of High Commissioners between India on the one hand and Canada and Australia on the other would be of great value. He had discussed the matter with Mr. Mackenzie King, who was sympathetic but said that at the moment he could not spare a suitable man to go to India.

The Viceroy-designate suggested that there might be a further discussion of the same kind next week on a possible social and economic programme for India. The Secretary of State and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar agreed.

[1] See Vol. II, Nos. 483, 554, 666 and Vol. III, No. 298.

35

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *12 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 21st June.[1] As so often happens a great deal of the ground with which it deals has been covered independently, and Wavell's succession is now almost ancient history. I am glad to be able to report that the atmosphere in connection with it continues to be very good indeed. Any hesitations there were in the first instance were I think very largely due to the entirely unexpected character of the appointment, and now that people have got used to the idea of a soldier as Viceroy there is no longer any criticism. What I so much hope myself is that starting with what may from this point of view possibly be the advantage that he has not been closely associated with politics, he may find it easier to keep the political temperature low at any rate for some time to come, since not quite so much may be expected from him on the political side as had he been, e.g. an ex-Cabinet Minister. But one can of course never quite tell how things will develop. I am so glad that you are announcing Jenkins' appointment[2] and I am sure that it will go admirably here.

2. As for Auchinleck's appointment, as you may imagine, everything continues to go smoothly. I think he is settling in well and getting hold of his business. At the moment I await his comments on the big telegram[3] about the East Asia command. I have not, for your own ear, found him entirely easy to deal with over this. He has shown a very strong tendency to hark back to what, whatever my views may be about it, I now regard as entirely settled policy, viz, the responsibility for Arakan and for the planning of operations on that side; and I think there is still visible a certain feeling of sourness that he as Commander-in-Chief in India should not be responsible for these matters. As you know I feel there is a great deal to be said on both sides, but the issue is now a dead one, and it is not the slightest use in my judgment flogging it. I have hinted that pretty clearly to Auchinleck, and told him that while if he could produce a convincing case on purely military grounds it would of course be my duty to give it as much support as I could, I did not think that he had the very

[1] No. 17.

[2] In his telegram 725 of 10 July, Mr Amery informed Lord Linlithgow that Field Marshal Wavell wished to announce the appointment of Mr Jenkins as his P.S.V. in the morning papers of 13 July. Lord Linlithgow agreed in his telegram 1470–S of 11 July. L/PO/8/9c and MSS. EUR. F. 125/25.

[3] 712 of 7 July. L/WS/1/1272: ff 163–8.

slightest chance of securing any of his points, and that, that being so, it was in effect a waste of time to start tilting at them. Apart from that, I am of course most anxious, given past history and the great importance of smooth working in future, first not to let him get into collision with Winston over this business at a time when there is no prospect whatever of Winston being moved in any degree by any arguments that may be put forward; and secondly to get him to accept wholeheartedly the scheme that has been put forward, in the interests of smooth working not only with Wavell as Viceroy, but with the Supreme Commander when the Supreme Commander is selected. The very greatest tact and diplomacy on all sides is going to be needed if this very difficult set-up is to work smoothly, and nothing could be more unfortunate than to have any important individual unhappy or dissatisfied with the arrangements that have been come to. But I hope very much that all will settle down and you may be certain that I shall do my best to keep things on the right lines.

* * *

4. I have read with much interest what you say in paragraph 4 of your letter about the Triumvirate. This is all past history and I doubt if it is worth arguing further. You know my views[4] which I have set out in full. I know, too, that they have had a fair run at the other end. That being so, I have no desire to press them further, though I shall not be altogether surprised if, as experience of the new set-up develops, you and my successor, and even Winston, may not occasionally find yourselves wondering whether the triumvirate might not have been better after all! But I do not propose to argue the point.

5. I am so glad that Winston is asking Wavell to attend Cabinets:[5] but I do not think there can be any question of a Viceroy-designate in any circumstances or to any extent representing the Government of India. He must attend in his personal capacity, and most valuable to him (and to his work in India hereafter) I am sure it will be that he should so attend. But that is as far as one could go. Do not for the present worry about the representation of India at the War Cabinet. There is not the slightest interest in it here. My Council have never reverted to the matter. No one is anxious to go home so far as I can see, and even the nationalist newspapers very rarely touch upon the absence of continued representation. I am quite sure myself (though Wavell of course when the time comes may take a different view) that the right thing to do is to send people *ad hoc* for a specific item of business, possibly letting them stay on in London for a month or so after that specific item of business has been disposed of, and I do not think that on that basis any particular difficulty need be anticipated in finding a man. But it does look as though there would be fairly substantial difficulty in finding a man (particularly if we give weight, as we must, to the communal aspect of this business) to spend any length of time in London; and while Mudaliar with his active mind has found plenty to do, I myself derive the

impression from our correspondence that there is nothing like a day's work in the ordinary way for one, still less for two representatives of India with the War Cabinet.

* * *

10. Now that Gwyer is *functus officio* as Chief Justice I am rather disposed to leave him alone on official matters, and I am not therefore much attracted by the suggestion you make in paragraph 11 of your letter that we should get him in in connection with a possible Federation of the Deccan States or the scheme promoted by non-official elements in the Deccan States Agency to which you refer. I doubt if you can have any idea of the poverty and paucity of material for running institutions or arrangements such as those suggested in the scheme in this country. But I will see what my people have to say about it and may comment further in a later letter.

11. I have just had three Governors of the smaller Provinces to stay here for a few days—Dow, Lewis and Clow. These visits by Governors are useful in putting one in direct personal touch and also as giving Governors an opportunity to check up on a variety of points with the departments in the Government of India concerned. Nothing very startling emerged. Lewis seems to be in pretty good form (I still think he would be quite a good Governor of the Central Provinces if my suggestion[6] that Twynam should succeed Maxwell as Home Member were to come to anything). Clow gave a good account of the position in Assam, though the internal economy of that Province has been inevitably disturbed a good deal by the immense influx of troops, American and British, and by the vast amount of money that contracts, road-building and troops themselves have brought in. I had a long talk with Dow about his revenue assessments. I think he anticipates that he may have a little difficulty with his Ministry, but seems quite clear in his own mind as to the right course to follow, and calculates indeed that the new assessments may very nearly double the land revenue of the Province and put the finances of Sind on a basis for which none of us could ever have hoped. He has discussed with Raisman during his visit here, and is very clear in his opposition in the outcome to any ceiling. He tells me that even if his Ministers, on his using his special responsibility to fix the rates at a point which they think inappropriate, were to go through the gesture of resigning, he very much doubts if there would be a breakdown. His own disposition in such circumstances would I think be to invite Sir Ghulam Hussain to form a new Ministry which would not include Khan Bahadur Khuhro, his Revenue Minister, of whom, as you will see from his fortnightly reports, his opinion is not unduly high. This is a very important financial business and Dow a very experienced man with a close knowledge of

4 See Vol. III, Nos. 755, 758, note 2 and 769.
5 See No. 14, note 2 and No. 17, para. 5.
6 See No. 13, para. 19.

the Province. I have asked him to keep me in very close touch: but I hope that he will be able to get the increased rates of revenue and also to avoid any really serious trouble with his Ministers.

36

Memorandum by Mr Jenkins[1]

L/E/8/2527: ff 110–13

13 July 1943

A SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRAMME FOR INDIA

1. *Introductory*. The essential elements in any programme are:

(i)	Planned industrialization	Urban
(ii)	Education Reform	General
(iii)	Improvements in the Medical and Public Health Services	General
(iv)	Improvements in communications	General
(v)	Agricultural development and connected matters, such as improvements in the Veterinary Services and the breeding and care of cattle, and the expansion of the co-operative system	Rural
(vi)	Town planning and slum clearance	Urban

The programme must at some stage be considered as a whole. For example (i) is closely connected with (ii) (iii) (iv) and (vi), and (v) is closely connected with (ii) (iii) and (iv).

2. *Planned industrialization.*

This is already being examined by the Reconstruction Committee of Council. Post-war needs and prospects will be studied first by an official Sub-Committee, and later by a policy Sub-Committee (including business men) over which a Member of Council will preside. The final plan will be framed by the Reconstruction Committee of Council. It is impossible at present to forecast its details but the following points are important:—

(a) Time is "of the essence". Nearly all countries in the world are out for post-war deliveries of capital equipment, and unless India works to a time-table, and works fast, she will be squeezed out. The Secretary of State and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar have already discussed the special case of electrical equipment with Sir Alexander Roger and Sir William Barton, and the India Office are pursuing the matter with the Chairman of the Inter-Departmental Committee concerned here. But the urgency clearly extends to fields other than the electrical.

(b) The sterling balances do not solve the problem of finance. Rupee finance must be found, and (except in so far as the Government of India decide to operate directly) found by Indian industrialists.

(c) The final plan will therefore be a collection of more detailed plans approved for action by industrial groups in India. These groups may turn to the United States, but the sterling balances will facilitate the supply of equipment and technical aid from the United Kingdom, and it is important that relations between Indian and British Industry be established on the right lines. On the one hand British Industry must cease to look upon India as a privileged field, in which there will be "safeguards" and in the last resort Government intervention, and think rather in terms of its relations with the Balkan States or the Argentine. On the other hand, Indian industry must recognize that the labourer is worthy of his hire, and that frank industrial co-operation can be secured only on a give-and-take basis. Some new form of partnership between British and Indian interests will be needed. Lord McGowan, Chairman of I.C.I. has discussed this matter with the Secretary of State and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, and is anxious to co-operate through some body of leading industrialists to be constituted here in response to an approach from India. But it is essential that the approach be made by India, and that when it is made leading British Industrialists make public their change of view on India's status.

(d) Scientific and Industrial Research has made great progress in India during the war. But there is an impression in London that the pooling of information is inadequate, and that Indian Research Workers are grappling with problems already solved elsewhere, and are therefore unable to concentrate on problems peculiar to India. India will require after the war a first class industrial research organisation, and it would be worth getting the best brains in India and the United Kingdom on to this subject now.

(e) Technical training has been greatly developed during the war, but as soon as the war ends arrangements for the mass training of Indian technicians, both in India and Overseas will almost certainly have to be made. These arrangements should be an integral part of the general plan.

"Planned industrialization" differs from the other elements in any possible programme, in that finance will unquestionably be found for development on a large scale. The Government of India could hardly refuse to co-operate with Industry in respect of Research and Technical Training, which are manifestly suitable objects for public expenditure.

[1] A note on the original indicated that it was prepared for a meeting on 16 July.

3. *Educational Reform.* School Education is administered by (i) Government (ii) Local Authorities such as Municipal Committees and District Boards and (iii) Private Bodies, largely religious or communal. The stages in boys' schools in the North of India are as follows:—

Stage	*Classes*	*Age*
Primary	I–IV	5–8/9
Lower Middle	V–VI	8/9–10/11
Middle	VII–VIII	10/11–12/13
High	IX–X	12/13–14/15

There are four class, six class, eight class, and ten class schools; the typical High School begins at the fifth and ends at the tenth class. The rudimentary organisation for girls is similar, but the stages are slightly different, e.g. the primary stage consists of five and not four classes.

The tenth class leads up to matriculation. Many matriculates do not enter a University, but the admissions to Universities are considerable. The normal degree course takes four years of which two may be spent in an "Intermediate College". At Delhi there has recently been a move to add a class to the "High" stage, and to reduce the degree course to three years.

Attempts at adult education have been made—mostly too half-hearted to be effective.

The faults in the system (I am writing of the Punjab and Delhi) are:

(i) that compulsion, on something like a local option basis, can be extended only to the primary stage and only to boys;

(ii) that the primary stage is too short to be of any permanent value. A Jat boy can herd buffaloes at six, use a bar harrow at ten, and plough at twelve. His parents use the primary classes as a crêche, and by the time the boy is twelve he can probably do little more than write his name.

(iii) that boys and girls are officially segregated. The bar is broken by special arrangement in some villages. No country can afford complete segregation at all stages unless it is content with a very low standard of literacy.

(iv) that English is indiscriminately taught (often from the fifth class) and that owing to the inadequacy of the primary stage, children frequently get caught up into an educational curriculum for which they are unfitted. The point is one for experts, but it seems wrong to assume that every boy and girl is capable of learning, and assimilating instruction in, a foreign language, especially when the mother tongue is not too well taught. Indian officials who speak and write English as well as highly educated Englishmen have told me that the strain of the second language is very severe, even for clever children.

(v) that girls' education has been disgracefully neglected.

(vi) that the teaching is unimaginative and makes little use of modern aids such as wireless and the cinema. (The technical difficulties of maintaining battery wireless sets in rural areas are, of course, very great).

(vii) that the curriculum is not sufficiently practical. (In the Punjab some of the most intelligent people are those who received the old-fashioned Urdu Middle School Education—eight classes; no English; an experimental farm with a good agricultural teacher attached).

(viii) that the approach to the illiterate adult has been confined too much to literacy, whereas the endeavour should have been to impart knowledge through the wireless and the cinema, with literacy as only part of the plan. Grown up people do not like Children's Primers, and the books supplied to village libraries are quite unreadable.

What India needs is an educational revolution based on universal compulsory education for boys and girls up to the age of 13/14. The illiterate adult should be dealt with mainly through the wireless and the cinema, but should be given every possible opportunity of becoming literate.

What India will get depends mainly on financial possibilities, but partly on the reactions of the public to such revolutionary ideas as co-education up to (say) the age of ten, and of "vested interests" to the inevitable change in Government's outlook on High School and University Education. Given a good system of State Education up to the age of 13/14 for boys and girls, higher education should probably be on a much more selective basis than at present, and technical schools would have to be developed on a large scale.

Educational reform on the scale required would imply the mass training of teachers, especially women, and the provision of a very large number of new school buildings and vast quantities of equipment.

The financial difficulties may be insuperable. But an entirely new and very bold approach to the problem is required. No truly national Government would tolerate the present state of illiteracy, and the appalling waste of money and effort at the primary stage. Such a Government would probably say "We are going to make the country literate, and are determined to raise the money to do it", and would instruct experts to plan on the assumption that certain objectives must be attained within 5 or 10 years.

4. *The Medical and Public Health Services.*

Curative medicine is largely a Government or Local Fund activity. Except in the cities, private practitioners and private hospitals and nursing homes are rare. Preventive medicine is wholly a Government or Local Fund activity. It covers not only vital statistics, sanitary control, the handling of epidemics and other similar matters, but anti-malaria measures, maternity and child-welfare, and school health services.

There is a strong case for the enlargement and improvement of urban hospitals, and an even stronger case for a vast expansion in rural medical facilities. It is true that the traditional medical systems are still popular, but there is a growing demand for medical relief on Western lines. In the Punjab and Delhi the objective has been "A doctor within five miles of every home" and this objective has to a great extent been attained. The expansion of curative medicine presents no great administrative difficulty, because medical education is already highly developed. But finance on a large scale would be required for buildings, equipment, and salaries.

Preventive medicine is in some ways a more intractable subject. Not only is there much to be done in the field of Research (especially on nutritional problems which are closely linked with problems of agriculture), but even when the proper line of advance is known, administrative action is difficult. Malaria is one colossal problem. Another is the training of women in adequate numbers for village work, and the maintenance of a more or less permanent cadre of village workers. Provincial Governments and Local Authorities (even with some assistance from the Rockefeller Foundation, whose methods are, in my opinion far too rigid) have so far hardly touched the fringe of their Public Health problems, and very large sums of money could profitably be spent on Research, Training, and practical measures in the field. No comprehensive national programme could neglect this subject.

5. *Communications.*

One of the Reconstruction Sub-Committees is already dealing with this subject. In peace-time communications are mainly a matter of money—the maintenance bill for roads usually being regarded as a deterrent to anything but "essential" schemes. The significance of good communications is frequently overlooked in the settled districts, though we hear a lot about their civilizing effect on the Frontier tribes. Easy travel and transportation do much to raise rural standards of living, because they make mixed farming on small-holdings worth while. They also increase enormously the efficiency and usefulness of the Civil Services and of institutions such as schools, hospitals, health centres, and veterinary dispensaries. A comprehensive national programme would probably be confined to roads. The extension of the Railways is a doubtful proposition, and Air Transport needs separate treatment.

6. *Agricultural Development and connected matters.*

Under this head fall several connected activities, which are of very great importance:—

(a) India is in the main a country of small-holding farmers. In many parts of the country they own their own land; elsewhere they are tenants, some with occupancy rights and others holding at the will of the landlord. In the Punjab

and Delhi the average *proprietary* holding is probably 7 acres; the tenants' holding is much smaller, but the statistics are misleading, as many owners exchange small areas for convenience of cultivation. The customary law in the Punjab and Delhi is such that (subject to a life interest to the widow, if any) land passes by inheritance in equal shares to all sons. Failing sons it passes on [in] equal shares to collaterals descended from a common ancestor with the last holder. Daughters have slender rights, but would ordinarily take in preference to collaterals in the eighth or ninth degree. Conditions in other parts of India are probably much the same. The "short point" is that the customary law of inheritance results in (a) sub-division, because at each generation land is ordinarily divided into a number of shares and (b) fragmentation, because each son or collateral expects to get a fair allotment of good land as well as bad. In some villages the process has gone so far that rational farming is impossible. The remedy applied in the Punjab and Delhi is "Consolidation of Holdings"—a process by which all holdings in the village are thrown back into the common pot, and redistributed. This movement has caught on; it began on a co-operative and voluntary basis, but now has statutory sanction in the Punjab (not yet in Delhi). It is admittedly a palliative, but an examination of "sample" families has shown that the effect of consolidation is probably considerable for three generations—or say 100 years. Unfortunately, the movement has not been a success elsewhere. A national programme must inevitably at the early stages come up against the uneconomic holding. The problem might be solved by Russian methods, but prejudice against interference with land tenures is so strong that not even a truly national Government would in my opinion dare to lay hands on the peasant proprietor. The line would probably be to create more peasant proprietors by the expropriation of the really big landlords, and to pursue palliatives such as consolidation, which while they do not facilitate mechanised agriculture do at least make it worth while to sink wells and spend money on levelling and other improvements.

(b) Much has already been done to provide and distribute improved seeds, and to design and make available improved implements. These activities could be very greatly expanded. There are no difficulties about staff.

(c) Capital for permanent improvements and for the purchase of cattle is already available through the Co-operative Credit Societies and by a system of Government loans. Any large scheme of agricultural development would have to ensure the availability and flexibility of credit.

(d) Cattle-breeding, animal husbandry, and the veterinary services, are of great importance to the farmer. There would be no administrative difficulty in expanding these services.

The agricultural portion of the programme would have to be planned and executed in close consultation with co-operative experts. It would also have to be linked with adult education, and the use of the wireless and the cinema.

7. *Town planning and slum clearance.*

The disgraceful state of the poorer quarters of most large Indian cities is due partly to neglect by Governments and Local Authorities (extending even to the most negligent administration of Government land), partly to blank ignorance of general principles, and partly to vested interests. Town planning and slum clearance are receiving more attention than formerly, but a drive to get really substantial results is overdue. Here again finance is the main difficulty—slum clearance accompanied by adequate re-housing is a costly business; but the problem ought to be tackled. In any industrial plan care must be taken to see that proper accommodation and urban services are provided for the new industrial population.

8. *The place of the Soldier and Ex-Soldier in any general programme.*

Reconstruction is often linked with demobilization. The position of the Indian soldier differs from that of his counterpart in the United Kingdom and the Dominions. The Indian Soldier is ordinarily a farmer—one of several brothers on a small-holding. The Army educates him to some extent (unless he is literate when he enlists) but his roots are in his village, and he seldom strikes out a line of his own when he is discharged. Unfortunately, he often finds himself out of adjustment with the village life and routine, and in a fairly high percentage of cases does not settle down again very happily. He is not always a good colonist, though he clamours for any land that may be available. The Punjab colony districts being full, or nearly so, it seems unlikely that there will be any large distribution of land after this war, and the average ex-soldier must either try to settle down again in his village, or strike out a line of his own. The Punjab ex-soldier will not work as a labourer; he might be absorbed in industry, or (with suitable training) in one of the rural services. Demobilization plans are being considered in New Delhi, and I need only say here that the place of the ex-soldier in any general programme seems most uncertain. The aftermath of the last war was uncomfortable, even with a liberal distribution of land; the aftermath of this war may be more so.

9. *Constitutional and Financial difficulties.*

With certain exceptions the subjects mentioned above as essential elements in any programme are Provincial. The exceptions appear to be certain aspects of Research and Technical Training, and a part of Communications. As, however, any large programme could be devised and financed only by the Centre, it seems clear enough that the Centre would wish to retain a considerable measure of control over execution. The constitutional difficulty could possibly (though not certainly) be overcome by offering the Provinces the benefits of the programme on condition that they submit to Central control.

On finance, I understand that an opinion may be received from the Government of India before the matter is discussed further here. It has been suggested above that the industrial plan will almost certainly be financed in any case. For the remaining items (or for any other items considered desirable) the ability of the Government of India to find finance is fundamental, and, in the absence of some general assurance about this, planning would be futile. I do not favour any idea of a gift by H.M.G. Such a gift would, I suppose, only make the sterling balances still larger, and the problem is not initial but recurrent cost.

10. *Possible lines of action.*

(1) To get general information about finance; if this is favourable,
(2) To make sure that the industrial plan is developed to a time-table and that at the appropriate moment Indian and British industrialists are brought together.
(3) To consider, in connection with (2), the post-war organisation of Scientific and Industrial Research, borrowing if necessary a first-class man from here to frame joint proposals with Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar.
(4) To consider, also in connection with (2), the post-war arrangements for technical training.
(5) To set up a small Committee on Educational Reform with definite terms of reference. Possibly a Central Committee with Provincial Members "sitting in" as required would do.
(6) To set up similar small Committees on the Medical and Public Health Services, Agricultural Development, and Town Planning and Slum clearance. (A U.K. expert on some of these subjects, especially Town Planning and Slum Clearance might be useful).
(7) To examine the various communications plans already framed, and to see that the Reconstruction Committee dealing with Communications takes a sufficiently broad view.
(8) To co-ordinate and approve the various plans proposed as above.

All action would have to be taken in very close consultation with Provincial Governments.

E. M. JENKINS

37

Note by M.I. 2 (a)

L/WS/1/1576: ff 79–80

RECENT ACTIVITIES OF SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE

MOST SECRET *14 July 1943*

1. Subhas Chandra Bose, who arrived in East Asia from Germany in May, appears to have gone to Tokio in mid-June. His arrival in Asia, at first kept secret, is now being widely publicised.

2. On his arrival in Tokio, Bose granted a number of interviews to Axis journalists at his headquarters at the Imperial Hotel. The gist of these interviews was reiteration of his belief in an Axis victory, in the imminent liberation of India with Axis help, and in the need for an armed revolt in India to coincide with invasion from the East. He also answered questions on such subjects as the character of Chiang Kai-shek and the appointment of the new Viceroy.

3. Bose has also spoken on the wireless—to India in English, Hindi and Bengali, and to Germany and Indians in Germany in German. In these broadcasts he again paid tribute to Axis benevolence, and urged all Indians outside India to get into touch with him and help him to organise a "gigantic force to sweep the British from India". This first veiled reference to the "*Indian National Army*" was later amplified by an official announcement from I.I.L. Headquarters in Singapore declaring that this "new Indian Army" is now under training. On July 8 a formation of the I.N.A. paraded before Bose and the Japanese Prime Minister, Tojo, during the latter's visit to Singapore.

4. On July 4, at a meeting of the Indian Independence League at Singapore ("Shonan") the interim President of the League, Rash Behari Bose, presented Subhas Bose to the League as its new President. S. C. Bose, who has adopted the title of "*Mehtarji*" ["*Netaji*"] or Leader, made a lengthy presidential address, chief points of which were:—

(a) Immediate formation under his aegis of a Provisional Government for India. When the revolution has succeeded this will be replaced by a permanent, popularly elected government.
(b) The hour of India's fight for Freedom has now struck.
(c) His sincere belief in Japan's good intentions.
(d) India's hope of freedom lies only in an Axis victory.
(e) Wavell's appointment means increased ruthlessness.

(f) Existence of many agents inside India with whom, in spite of the British Secret Service, he has kept in close touch.
(g) Great difficulties ahead.

5. In general, Bose's arrival in Asia may be said to have greatly increased the tempo of subversive propaganda, and appears to have galvanised the I.I.L. into greater political activity. It is also noticeable (and to be expected) that while praising and thanking Japan, Bose never forgets to refer to Germany and to Axis sympathy for India. Before his coming the I.I.L. was only publicised in connection with Japan: S. C. Bose clearly intends to raise the movement into a national campaign for freedom supported by all three Axis powers.

6. Bose's great drive and political acumen, his prestige in Indian revolutionary circles, his understanding of both Indian and English character, will be of real value to the Japanese whose propaganda against India has hitherto lacked imagination. Although we have good reason to believe that his statement at 4(f) is exaggerated there is no doubt that under Bose's direction subversive activities and espionage in India will be greatly intensified.

7. Bose has now finally burned his boats with us by virtue of his association with Germany and Japan, his political future being entirely dependent upon the continued military success of the Japanese and the paralysis of British rule in India by internal revolt. Fortunately public morale and internal security in India are now fairly steady and the Japanese widely feared. Bose will undoubtedly be able to make some capital out of the economic distress and the political deadlock but unless he can win over Congress *en bloc* his chances of stirring up a major revolt would appear to be small. Had he arrived in East Asia last August or even during Gandhi's fast his prospects would have been much better.

8. A biographical note[1] on Bose is attached.

[1] Not printed.

38

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 310–11

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *15 July 1943, 9.5 pm*
Received: 15/16 July, midnight

No. 5718. H.M.G. will have gathered from our recent weekly food reports[1] increasing gravity of food position in India. We had serious difficulty in the

[1] L/E/8/3307.

Spring which partly with the help of H.M.G. we were able to bridge. But things have now taken a decided turn for the worse and we are faced with a situation of utmost gravity in which we must ask for the help of H.M.G. and that as a matter of extreme urgency.

2. Situation has been reviewed with the assistance of representatives of all Provinces and of the Indian States. We must make it clear that we have postponed coming back to H.M.G. until the last possible moment, and our present appeal is result of exhaustive examination of the whole position and review of possible methods of dealing with it undertaken in consultation with all provinces, with the Indian States and with the representatives of the defence services.

3. Examination of the position as a whole shows a shortage of 1.29 million tons between estimated surpluses likely to be secured through Government procurement and estimated needs of Provinces, Indian States and defence services. Problem is to a minor extent one of distribution. It is essentially one of getting adequate flow of food grains from cultivators. That adequate flow is at present lacking. Cultivator continues to hold

(a) In the hope of increased prices.
(b) Because of his apprehension (to some extent justified) of probable decline in value of token money and anxiety to secure bullion instead of paper.
(c) In parts of Eastern area because of fear of Japanese invasion and anxiety to have reserve on which to draw.
(d) There exists a deep-rooted conviction among cultivators spread by diverse anti-Government interest[s] which one (sic) [?our] propaganda cannot shake that there is a drain on India's resources for the defence services so enormous as to lead to a certainty of serious shortage.

We are organising anti-hoarding drives and our efforts have so far had some success. But that does not touch the root of the problem. We are clear after exhaustive review of the whole position that only answer is substantial import of food grains from outside with the help of H.M.G. to start not later than September.

4. Public knowledge of early and substantial import with H.M.G. behind it is in our judgement alone likely to threaten the level of prices and so to draw out accumulated stores of food grains and to encourage holders to dispose at once instead of holding in the hope of a further appreciation in market prices. Mere knowledge that substantial imports are on their way or have been guaranteed will in our opinion produce a marked effect and their actual arrival should be decisive.

5. Govt. of India are fully alive to possible adverse effect on operations to be based on India and operations elsewhere of diversion of ships for this purpose.

They have given full weight to that consideration. For all that they remain of opinion that solution they recommend is not only the only one but on a broad view is thoroughly sound. Acute food shortage in this country such as we at present anticipate will almost certainly produce

(a) Internal disorder and strain which will involve calling on defence services for assistance in connection with internal security and thereby distracting them from their main object.
(b) Further increases in price of food grains which is immediately reflected in prices of all other commodities and is bound to have sharp and disastrous effect on inflation.
(c) Effect of inflation and rise in prices will not only be very serious from the point of view of our (? economy here). It directly reacts on the cost of the war, both present and future so far as India is concerned, to H.M.G.
(d) There are already indications that shortage of food and necessity for operatives to spend lengthy periods in food queues etc. is having a bad effect on munitions production and that bad effect is bound to be aggravated.
(e) We need not emphasise effect on general morale in this country of acute and widely spread food shortage.

6. H.M.G. may be certain that we shall leave nothing undone ourselves to try to meet this position. To the extent that this is an administrative problem of procurement and distribution we are already doing all we can but emphasise we cannot make such action effective within the time available. But as matters stand we have no option but to ask for help from home, and that on a very substantial scale. What after the most careful examination of the position and consultation with Provinces and Indian States we would ask for is a programme of 500,000 tons to be spread over 6 months imports to start (? progressively from) September. Of that 500,000 tons 250,000 tons would represent defence services wheat requirements for six months. We realise how unpalatable this demand must be to H.M.G. and we realise serious potential effect on military operations. We do make it however after full reflection and with the conviction that it is wholly justified and in the best interests of the prosecution of the war. If there is any further information which H.M.G. would like to have from us to enable them to consider please let us know without delay. We cannot however over-estimate urgency of the matter or importance of our being able to make an early public statement on this subject.

39

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *15 July 1943, 9.45 pm*
Received: 15 July, 11.40 pm

No. 1497–S. Please see my official Food Department telegram No. 5718 of 15th July which has the full support of Commander-in-Chief and myself.[1]

2. Position that has been reached is, as you will see, one of gravely serious character. We are sparing no effort in a most difficult situation to get things straight. But the problem is a very serious one. In present circumstances the cultivator has every incentive to hold for higher prices and to put no more on the market than is necessary to secure his essential monetary needs. The economic condition of the cultivator throughout the country being excellent with the ruling high prices for food grains, the temptation to do so is far greater than would otherwise be the case.

3. Commander-in-Chief has now formally intimated to me that, having regard to the risks of civil disturbance and the effect on the movement of labour, &c. of food shortage, his considered opinion is that our military effort over the next two years will be in serious danger unless satisfactory solution is found to the food problem: and he and I are both clear that the best and surest method of meeting the case is importation of stocks for distribution on the lines suggested in our official telegram. We both fully realise the shipping difficulties of His Majesty's Government and the relation of such difficulties to the prosecution of our plans for the Far Eastern campaign. But we are apprehensive that an even greater impediment to the early development and success of those preparations may result if we cannot get over the difficulties that at present confront us over food. There is already evidence of serious and growing effect of food shortage on munitions production. From a different point of view it is of course also definitely to the interest of His Majesty's Government who are bearing and will continue to bear so great a share of war expenditure in this country that by keeping food available at a reasonable price immediate and sharp inflationary effects all round on their expenditure of food shortage should be offset.

4. Time factor is of first importance. I am advised and wholly agree that we can afford to spare no effort to bring situation under control before the next *rabi* harvest. I therefore would press most strongly, with the full support of the Commander-in-Chief from the military side, that His Majesty's Government

should assist us by making shipping available to carry figure proposed in our official telegram.

5. I am myself convinced that the amount of imports that will in practice be necessary to secure the dual purpose of freeing domestic supplies into distribution whilst effecting a salutary influence on food prices to the great benefit of our deflationary efforts is directly related to extent to which I might be authorised to make unconditional promise of assistance through imports. Import, publicly advertised, is the one way in which we can hope effectively and swiftly to reduce prices, and by threat which it constitutes of breaking market, to force cultivator to bring his stocks to sale. These stocks are at the moment steadily appreciating in terms of rupees. If I can promise relief through wheat imports to the extent necessary to secure the Indian food position I believe that the actual imports that will be needed may if all goes well prove to be relatively small. I hope therefore that when I address the Central Legislature for the last time on August 2nd, I may be permitted to make the following statement: "I am authorised by His Majesty's Government to announce that they propose to place at the disposal of the Government of India over the period up to 31st March 1944, shipping sufficient to import into India enough wheat to satisfy all reasonable requirements of the population". But if such unequivocal undertaking is not possible I would press for an undertaking in terms of either a high limit such as mentioned in our official telegram or that no limit be made public. For I am persuaded that the publication of a meagre allotment, too small to affect the market, but large enough to suggest that no further imports are likely would be harmful rather than helpful.

[1] 'myself' deciphered as 'Department'.

40

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *15 July 1943, 9.40 pm*
Received: 15 July, 8.30 pm

No. 1498–S. My personal telegram of today, No. 1497–S. Food. To avoid clouding the issues, I have not touched on connected and important point that imports by sea to e.g. Karachi, Bombay, Madras and/or Calcutta would greatly ease burden on our badly strained internal transport system, a relief which is likely to be of most material importance from point of view of general war effort and new operations to be based on India.

41

Note by Mr Amery

L/E/8/2527: f 108

15 July 1943

An excellent memo.[1] The key to the whole situation is finance. The obvious method of stimulating and at the same time controlling provincial action is that of the Grant-in-Aid as applied here by the Centre to Local Government authorities. The next question is how to find the Central finance. The sterling credits can be used to secure certain equipment. But a large quantity of rupee finance will be needed. My suggestion would be an all out propaganda drive for a national regeneration loan of 500–1000 crores (and I would make it a loan with bonus prizes) to cover a Five or 10 years' Plan.

L. S. A.

[1] No. 36.

42

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Colville (Bombay)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/57

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *15 July 1943*

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL

My dear Colville,

Very many thanks for your most secret and personal letter of the 9th July,[1] about Gandhi, and the possibility of a fast by him. I am most grateful and much relieved to find both that you have no independent corroboration of these rumours as to his intentions, and that you and I are in general agreement as to the line to be taken.

2. I am now writing to other Governors, and I will of course let you know the outcome. But I hope very much that we may all be in line.

3. I need not add (since any letter would have come through your Government) that there is not a word of truth in these rumours that have been appearing in the press, that I have had a letter from the Mahatma calling off the August resolution, &c. &c. This is, as I understand it, purely part of the nationalist press campaign to keep the old man in the limelight, and to stir up public interest against the arrival of the anniversary date of 9th August.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[1] No. 32.

43

The Marquess of Linlithgow to all Provincial Governors[1]

MSS. EUR. F. 125/111

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *15 July 1943*

MOST SECRET AND PERSONAL

My dear ——,

I have thought it well to consider with the Governor of Bombay, as Governor most immediately concerned, the possibility of a further fast by Gandhi to mark the twelve months' anniversary of his detention, and the line that we could appropriately adopt in the event of such a fast materialising. I send you herewith a copy of the reference[2] which I made to the Governor. As you will see, I have raised two main points: the first, what line should be taken about the fast if there is one; and second, what should be done about publicity.

2. The reply[3] I have had from Colville shows that there is no information in Bombay to suggest that a fast is imminent; but the Governor quite agrees as to the wisdom of clearing the ground in advance and, on the propositions which I referred to him, expresses himself as being in general agreement with my view.

3. I should greatly appreciate it if you would be kind enough to let me have your own view on those points at as early a date as possible. I am writing in similar terms to other Governors.[4]

Yours ——,

LINLITHGOW

[1] Except Bombay. [2] No. 29. [3] No. 31.

[4] The Governors' replies, which were in substantial agreement with Lord Linlithgow's view (see No. 68, para. 2), are in MSS. EUR. F. 125/111.

44

Sir A. Hope (Madras) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/71

SECRET GUINDY, *15 July 1943*

No. 4/1943

5. The Hindu Mahasabha are very keen on getting a Ministry formed and the Muslim League would join in, but in spite of this hotch-potch of oddments, they would be in a hopeless minority.

6. Anyhow people are not thinking about politics or even the actual fighting, but almost entirely about food and prices. I am profoundly relieved that Free Trade is dead as regards the South. It would have been absolutely disastrous

for us as the whole of our northern rice from the deltas would have gone to Bengal and we should have had famine conditions with rocketing prices, and very real and justified anger at food being allowed to leave a heavily deficit Province. Even so, the situation is bad and the next three months are going to be very difficult. The ryots are hoarding and dispersing their stocks, and it is very difficult to trace them. There is much corruption among junior officials, I fear, and certainly on the railways as regards waggons.

7. We are not getting anything like our quotas from other Provinces and States under the basic plan, but are of course pressing them all the time. I feel very sore that when we were asked last year to send great quantities of rice to Ceylon, Travancore and Cochin, we immediately did so without delay, although we knew we were short ourselves. Now, when we are much worse off, the surplus provinces stick to their surplus and do everything they can to avoid fulfilling their agreements in the basic plan; it shows the folly of helping your neighbour in this country unless one is legally assured of a *quid pro quo*.

8. Another of our difficulties is the fact that every other person seems to eat a different kind of rice and they have not yet realised that they have got to eat what they can get and not what they want. The middle classes are the worst and most selfish; buying up rice whenever they can get it and each house hoarding as much as they can. Where a household kept one bag for an emergency, they now keep four, five or six, and when that is multiplied by thousands, it means a very considerable hoard.

9. I have just returned from a tour in Bangalore and the Ceded Districts. Both my Secretary and I got food poisoning in Mysore on the way down and I had to cancel my outdoor engagements in Bangalore, but I had recovered before going on to Anantapur, Kurnool and Bellary. The latter is in a very bad way; half the population on famine relief, no rain, no ploughing, very little food, and the whole countryside looking like a black desert. The crops have failed there two years running and, as I say, they have not even sown them this year, although it is not too late for rain yet. The other two districts have had good rain and prospects are good, but the immediate scarcity of food is there, and there are a limited number of famine camps. I saw many of these and thought them well run, and the people well fed, but the price of cloth was a constant grievance, which I hope and believe will now be rectified by the Standard Cloth Scheme; in fact prices are already tumbling and look like going lower still.

10. I am going up to Bezwada, Rajahmundry and Nellore next week to try and ginger up the Grain Purchasing Organisation in those surplus districts and also have a heart-to-heart talk with the leading ryots, merchants and millers, all of whom are in league together to force up prices and hide their paddy.

45

The Marquess of Linlithgow to General Auchinleck[1]

L/P & J/8/600: f 145

PERSONAL AND MOST SECRET *15 July 1943*

My dear Commander-in-Chief,

While no authoritative information is available from any source to suggest that Congress and other nationalist groups are planning any extensive activities to mark the end of the first twelve months of Mr Gandhi's detention, there have been forthcoming from various parts of the country indications that as this anniversary approaches, there has been some increase in political tension and that certain revolutionary elements have been active in canvassing support amongst their own kind for the resumption of crime and violence directed both against government servants and against property as a means of reviving subversive activity and of restoring the prestige of the Congress organisation.

2. I shall not be surprised if there are sporadic outbreaks in various regions and in particular some slight recrudescence of unlawful activities in north Bihar and in the Ahmedabad districts. While I am anxious not to disturb the process of training more than may be necessary, I regard it as a wise act of insurance that we should during the first week in August make some show of force in those areas in which there is any likelihood of substantial mischief and that local commanders should be warned in good time that they may be called upon at short notice to make available troops in support of the civil authority.

3. In particular, I would suggest that in north Bihar, in Gujarat, and any other areas about which the civil authorities may be particularly anxious, motorized troops should be held in readiness, and should be shown to the public, during the early part of August up to and including say the 10th of that month.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 20 July 1943 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

46

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *15 July 1943*

I was very glad to get a letter[1] from Sinclair this morning to say that he is going to provide a converted York bomber to take the Wavells out to India and bring your party back. As a matter of precaution, however, we are writing to the Ministry of War Transport to find out if there is any ship likely to be sailing from Bombay about that time which could be held up in case of any accidental difficulty over the air passage.

2. In your letter of July 5th,[2] you raised the question of a possible renewed fast by Gandhi. On the question of seeing it through I am, of course, entirely with you and expect Wavell will feel the same if it should come in his time. On the question of publicity I can only give you my first reaction which is that I fully see the difficulty of complete silence and springing the fact of Gandhi's death on an unprepared public. There would also be the danger of rumours getting out and of my being forced to admit the fact of a fast in answer to Parliamentary questions. On the other hand, I do feel that last time there was too much publicity, with the result that the thing was kept on the boil the whole time, with, I imagine, an even greater strain upon the weaker brethren in your Executive than if there had been less or even no publicity. Would it be impossible to announce the fact of the fast say three or four days after it had begun and then that a bulletin would only be issued once a week, or at any rate not more often than once every three days, and at the same time definitely to limit the amount of space allowed for comment?

3. I quite agreed with your letter[3] to Herbert about the tangle he has got into. But the whole of this business of intrigue and counter-intrigue in Bengal makes me wonder increasingly whether our British Parliamentary system, which I am convinced is impossible at the Centre, is not also unsuitable in the Provinces, and whether something in the nature of the Swiss system would not be much better. The essence of that system is that the Executive is elected by the Legislature as a whole, by secret ballot on proportional representation, and is then permanently ensconced for the lifetime of Parliament. That makes it necessarily a coalition government, and, being relatively free from party pressure in the Chamber, more inclined to get down to business and to work together. Moreover, the secret ballot is a further protection against the mischievous power of

In Ind. there are no secrets!

L.

the party caucuses in Indian affairs. I have sometimes wondered whether the system might not be conceivably introduced in the case of an Indian deadlock without any change either in legislation or even in the Letters of Instruction to the Governors, provided always that the Legislature itself were prepared to play. What I mean is that a Governor might intimate that he would choose as his Prime Minister whoever was returned at the top of the poll in such a private ballot of the legislature, and would advise that person to choose as his colleagues the next 7 or 8, or whatever the appropriate number might be, in the ballot; going on to say that in view of the nature of the confidence shown in such a coalition he would not expect such a government to resign on anything but a series of hostile divisions which would justify a dissolution.[4]

[1] L/PO/8/8b. [2] No. 30. [3] No. 26.

[4] L/PO/6/103 shows that Mr Amery had obtained from the Swiss Minister in London information on the working of the Swiss Constitution; and contains minutes by Mr Amery, Sir D. Monteath and Mr Patrick on the question whether a method of choosing the executive similar to the Swiss system could be applied in the Indian Provinces without amendment of the Government of India Act, 1935, and the Governors' Instrument of Instructions.

47

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *16 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 1502–S. Your private and personal telegram of 10th July, No. 726.[1] I am so sorry but it has been impossible owing to the present pressure to get a satisfactory draft together. I am sending you a tentative reply, which has been prepared by my Advisers. It does not fill the bill so far as I am concerned and I want to have a little more time to think about this whole business, for, while I am very conscious of the objections, which indeed seem to me to be decisive, and of the possible unfortunate effect on rural economy and in rural areas of any ill-considered pouring out of money, &c., I do not want either to overweight the rural side as against the industrial, and I am anxious to get my criticisms and comments into the best shape possible so that you may use them, so far as you agree with them, to the most telling effect in Cabinet Committee or elsewhere. The telegram[2] which I am sending separately may help you in your discussions with Wavell and Mudaliar. I would however beg that you should regard it as

[1] Asking for the views of Lord Linlithgow and his advisers on the memorandum by Sir S. Cripps and Mr E. Bevin enclosed with No. 574 in Vol. III in time for a meeting of Lord Wavell, Mr Amery and Sir A. R. Mudaliar the following week. L/E/8/2527.

[2] No. 48.

purely provisional and confine it to yourself, Wavell and Mudaliar at this stage. I will do my best to let you have an early and more considered reply (which may of course cover a good many of the points taken in the telegram now under discussion) for the Cabinet.

2. Let me only add that I by no means accept the suggestion in paragraph 9 of the separate telegram as to the constitutional position, &c. in postwar India, and that I am very doubtful (*cf.* paragraph 31 of my private letter of 2nd May)[3] as to the likelihood of His Majesty's Government being able to spare any material number of men of high quality.

[3] Vol. III, No. 681.

48

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *16 July 1943, 10.20 pm*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 1515–S. Following is the text of the draft referred to in my No. 1502–S of July 16th. It should of course be treated as wholly provisional and preliminary, and be read subject to the comments in my No. 1502–S:—

Begins. Social policy. My Advisers and I have naturally given the closest attention to the suggestions contained in the note by the Ministers of Labour and Aircraft Production[1] as well as to the India Office[2] and your own[3] memoranda. We have, as you are aware, set up a number of Reconstruction Committees which with the aid of the data prepared by Departments and their experts are surveying not only the inevitable problems of the post-war period but also a long-term development policy. This includes industries, communications, agricultural and social services. The Provinces and States to a lesser degree are doing the same.

2. The obstacles to rapid progress in this planning are shortage of staff and many serious problems arising in connection with food supplies, war industries, transportation and other matters that are engaging our constant attention, and which impose a very severe strain on the administration, especially in the Provinces. As long as a war remains close to India and our economic problems are as serious as they are today, any initiation of a large-scale development policy would, we are convinced, be administratively and financially impossible. We are, however, already carrying out a considerable development of industries and agriculture to satisfy war requirements which have also a long-term value.

3. It is not I think open to discussion that our present policy is the only one possible. If we fail to plan a vigorous development policy for post-war years, we should be neglecting to do what practically every other country in the world is doing, and should earn the well-deserved reproaches of the people of India.

4. Any idea, however, that this policy, accompanied perhaps by some visible manifestation of our future intentions, will alter the trend of public opinion in political matters [is], in our opinion, a mistake. As experience in other countries has shown, no Government can hope to meet the full aspirations of a public hoping for a brave new world after the war. In India, many of the ideas held by the public, e.g. as to the expansion of industry, are very impracticable. There is much real or pretended suspicion of our intentions and any well-advertised development policy might well be acclaimed by the people as only a belated attempt to remedy past omissions.

5. It is not by such rather blatant methods that we shall alter the political situation and for that reason we have deliberately not courted publicity for our planning activities. Our desire is to assure the people that all preparations are being made for a development policy, in respect of which non-officials will be consulted, and that whatever Government may be in power after the war will find them ready to hand. To attempt to make political capital out of our proposals would perhaps have the effect of damning them in advance, to the future detriment of the people of India. If, however, we are obviously fulfilling a public demand, confidence and reliance on Government will assuredly be enhanced.

6. We realise of course that interest in post-war problems as an alternative to purely political speculation, especially among educated youth, is to be encouraged and the movement known as the New India Planning Groups is endeavouring to foster it. It is, however, I think, worth recording that the effect of our war-time problems and controls as well as the necessity for post-war planning is exercising an unifying influence on India as a whole, is developing a certain amount of public spirit, and more people are realising that non-co-operation with Government is to their own detriment and that of the Indian people.

7. As regards the practicable possibilities of post-war development there are certain realities which must be appreciated. After the war the political situation and the relations between the Centre, the Provinces and States may all be in the melting pot and while some countries are discovering the need of centralising planning and[4] control of post-war development (e.g. Australia) political forces

[1] See Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 276; also No. 544, note 2 in that Vol.
[2] See Vol. III, No. 114, note 1. [3] Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 356.
[4] 'centralising planning and' deciphered as 'centralising plan in opposition to'.

in India are pushing the other way. Under these conditions it is not easy to initiate an all-India development policy. Furthermore, the weakness in numbers and in some respects in quality of the administrative staff available in the Provinces is a serious obstacle to development. A more serious danger, however, is that some of the Provincial Governments may regard expansion of staff as an opportunity for rewarding their supporters rather than improving their administration. We have, as you will remember, had previous experience of such developments in connection with rural development. In the case of urban development progress is stifled by the almost universal misgovernment and corruption of Municipalities and we have either to await the formation of a healthier public opinion or encourage Provincial administrations to intervene more frequently than in the past.

8. It appears therefore that the development of self-government at the Centre, in the Provinces, and in urban areas, is to some extent inimical to a successful social and economic development policy.[5] This requires an administration of high quality, centralisation of direction, a firm dismissal of all wildcat schemes, and the suppression of nepotism in appointments. Given these conditions much could be done for India but any large expenditure of money under other conditions might be merely to mortgage the financial future without an adequate return.

9. The best assumption on which we can base our planning is that post-war India will be largely self-governing by coalition administrations not inherently hostile to the British connection and willing to make full use of British Administrators and the advice and guidance of the Viceroy and Governors. It would be an essential condition, however, for a successful development policy that the latter should feel able to use their powers to insist on efficient administration, and if the atmosphere is one of the goodwill this would not necessarily be resented if obviously intended for the good of the people.

10. As regards the prohibition [?industrial] development much can be done to balance, rationalise and extend India's industry. Large scale expansion of markets must depend however, on raising the standard of living of the people and the facilities available for international trade. There is great scope for the improvement of roads and communications generally, which in view of the direct and indirect returns to be anticipated could probably be financed by internal loans.

11. It is in regard to agriculture, however, that the greatest progress is to be expected. This is essential if the present rate of increase of population is to be provided for and the standard of living raised. It is not a question of vast sums of money so much as patient work by enthusiastic District Officers and Agricultural staff in educating the people by well-proved methods. It would be a

mistake however to allot funds except where we know they will be wisely spent, as for example, in the case of resettlement schemes for soldiers now under consideration.

12. It is in regard to health and education services that there is a danger of the creation of a burden of overhead expenditure beyond the capacity of the country. Here we should start with the overhauling of existing institutions and the gradual development of such sound and inexpensive services as are suited to the resources of the country. Other social services such as employment exchanges, relief measures, &c. deserve study and might possibly be initiated on a very limited scale.

13. There is undoubtedly great scope for mass education by propaganda methods amongst both the urban and rural population and this may produce quicker results for less expenditure than universal elementary education on European lines. It can do and is doing much towards breaking down existing prejudices, introducing new methods in agriculture and promoting better ideas as regards hygiene. It may also help towards the inculcation of a savings mentality but this is mixed up with the money-lender problem which would have to be tackled at the same time.

14. The population question is not one that is likely to be solved by any enquiry and there is much danger inherent in the whole subject. With the development of health services a still greater rate of increase can be anticipated which may to some extent be counteracted by later marriage, industrialisation and birth control. The latter is already making its way into urban communities. The remedy lies in stimulating greater productivity of the soil, a policy which is perfectly practicable, and possibly larger imports of foodstuffs in exchange for manufactured goods and raw materials.

15. We are not much in favour of the proposal to hold an Eastern Regional Conference of the I.L.O. There is a danger that it would simply be utilised as a means of anti-British propaganda to an audience of sympathetic Americans and Chinese. The recent I.P.R. Conference was not an encouraging precedent. It would also be very difficult under the present conditions of strain to carry out the preparatory work necessary.

16. From the above review it will be seen that our general view is that—

(*a*) the importance of planning for reconstruction should be emphasised in any instructions issued to the new Viceroy but attempts should not be made to make political capital out of it.

5 'social and economic development policy' deciphered as 'successful ordered and economic development of policy'.

(*b*) It is impossible to launch a development policy under conditions as they are at present or are likely to be for some time to come.
(*c*) We should plan for a sound but cautious development policy, and so far as we are still responsible for Government carry it out with energy and resolution at the end of the war.
(*d*) It is necessary to bear in mind the realities of the situation and the difficulty under self-Government of ensuring an adequate return for expenditure on development. Caution in launching new schemes is therefore indicated.
(*e*) Preliminary steps should be considered now for providing the additional staff necessary to carry out such a policy.

17. As regards (*d*) [*e*?] above, we would recommend the despatch of a number of specially selected Indians of mature experience to Europe and possibly elsewhere for post-graduate technical study and to gain practical experience of more highly developed administrations. This would be popular in India but unless very carefully organised and supervised would merely provide a series of world tours at Government expense. To cover our immediate requirements for planning and to fill the gaps that exist in the administration, a certain number of British experts might with advantage be taken on at an early date on short-term contracts of say 5 years. It will of course be objected that this measure will deprive qualified Indians of appointments. So far as the Central Government goes this can be faced but to meet possible objections in the Provinces some financial bargain might be desirable but the expenditure involved would not be on a large scale. *Ends.*

49

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir B. Glancy (Punjab)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

CONFIDENTIAL THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *16 July 1943*

My dear Glancy,

In my last letter to you[1] I touched on Muslim League affairs, but Major Shaukat Hyat Khan's recent visit has reminded me of an intention to write to you at rather greater length about Punjab politics and to ask for your views.

2. I have been watching with great interest and not without anxiety the political changes that began with Sikander's death. Sikander's consistent policy, I presume, was to make his Government not a Muslim Government but a "Punjabi" Government offering fair treatment to the minorities. The Assembly was split not on communal lines but on lines of economic interest. The pact

with the Akali Sikhs[2] was in accord with Sikander's general policy. To an outside observer the most obvious change resulting from Sikander's death has of course been the increased pressure of the League on the Ministry. You have more than once commented on this and it looks as though Khizar, for the present at any rate, lacks the political ability and experience to stand up effectively against Jinnah.

3. Now I come to a more doubtful thesis on which I am very anxious to have the benefit of your views. I have from time to time in the light of press comment or casual remarks in interviews inclined to identify a feeling that under the stress of the League's growing influence in the Punjab the Muslim members of the Ministry and their hangers-on have been tempted to show themselves more Muslim than the League itself, this of course by way of a counter-attraction to the League. In fact, that the non-communal policy of Sikander is being rapidly abandoned by Khizar and that the Government is tending to become Muslim rather than "Punjabi". I realise of course that on occasions Sikander himself must have shown a preference for Muslims, but he does seem to have tried his best to compromise on communal issues and the tendency, if I am right in identifying it, which I have mentioned would not be in any way a surprising result of his removal from the scene.

4. If I am right in what I have said, and I trust you will correct me if I have been overdrawing the picture, it is clear that the alliance between the Muslim Ministers on the one side and the non-Muslims on the other is far from secure. And I suppose that with the break-up of this alliance and the initiation of purely communal politics in the Assembly the risk that Punjab affairs would be reduced to the level of those of Sind or Bengal with no chance of stable Government cannot be overlooked.

5. If there is anything in this, the issue is obviously one of great importance from the all-India standpoint, and we must naturally consider whether there is anything that you or I can properly and wisely do to prevent a breakdown. I am not too clear as to how matters stood in Sikander's life-time as between him and the Governor of the Province in the matter of the exercise of special responsibilities, &c. I have always been under the impression that Emerson, Craik and thereafter yourself have been very anxious to take Sikander with you even where special responsibilities[3] were involved, but that naturally is the case with any Governor and in no way relieves the Governor concerned of the full responsibility that rests on him to exercise his special responsibility where

[1] Of 12 July 1943. MSS. EUR. F. 125/92.

[2] By the Sikander–Baldev Singh Pact announced on 15 June 1942, Sir Sikander Hyat Khan, the Punjab Premier, promised certain concessions to the Sikh community. In return Sardar Baldev Singh entered Sikander's ministry and undertook to support the Unionist Government in the interests of communal unity and the defence of the country.

[3] Government of India Act 1935, Sec. 52.

circumstances necessitate that whether his Premier likes it or not and at whatever cost in terms of the retention of a particular Government. What I should like to know is whether in fact there has in the past been in the Punjab either in your own time or at an earlier stage any blurring of the dividing line between matters in relation to which you and your predecessors acted on advice and those which you had had to decide in your individual judgment or discretion.[4] I have certainly never had any suggestion that I can offhand remember in reports either from you or from your predecessors that that was the case or I should have been bound to take notice of it. But in the situation we are now considering I would be glad of your formal confirmation.

But, that issue apart, I recognized the value in the past of an experienced Premier of high standing such as Sikander who had himself acted as Governor and who appreciated the responsibilities that fall upon the Governor and the latter's obligation to keep the balance and safeguard the minorities and the services. In present circumstances we are faced with stronger communal pressure and a Premier who, though I am sure he is well-meaning, I would judge to be not of Sikander's calibre, and in all probability (so far as I can form judgment from your reports) to be in a weaker position in the Province. If that is the case it is more necessary than ever before that there should be no shadow of misunderstanding on the part of any interests or section or on the part of Ministers as to the Governor's special responsibilities or his intentions to discharge those special responsibilities, whatever may be the reaction on the ministerial position, a view with which I am certain that you will yourself entirely agree.

6. I have little information how the minorities in the Punjab are reacting to the present situation but there have been reports of nervousness among the Sikhs, and obviously the mere word "Pakistan" must be enough to alarm all non-Muslims in the Province. Possibly also the non-Muslim Indian members of the Services may be anxious and indeed it would be surprising if they were not. If there is anything in that, the importance of the special responsibilities and of general appreciation of their existence and of the Governor's readiness to intervene if necessary becomes of course greater than ever, and I can conceive circumstances in which the substantial guarantee provided by the exercise of the special responsibilities might well tend to prolong the life of [a] stable Government and prevent a sudden collapse.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

4 The Government of India Act 1935 designated certain matters in which the Governor was to 'act in his discretion' and on which in consequence his Ministers were not entitled to tender advice. In certain other matters, especially in the discharge of his special responsibilities, he was to 'exercise his individual judgment'; on these Ministers were entitled, and expected, to tender advice to the Governor but, having considered it, he was free to do what he thought right.

50

Mr Sarat Chandra Bose to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

COONOOR, *17/24 July 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

The march of events in the Far East during the last six years and, in particular, during the last nineteen months has progressively deepened the anxiety of all lovers of the country for its future. The retrogressive march of events inside India has increased their sense of frustration to an alarming extent. British rulers of the country may afford to be complacent; they may feel that they have the situation well in hand. But children of the soil and, particularly, those who have closely watched and studied events in the western world from 1933 to 1939 and in the Far East from 1937 to 1941 and subsequently, may not be far wrong if they treat that complacency as synonymous with ostrichism.

Many a time have I thought of writing to Your Excellency from my detention camp—perhaps, "menagerie" would be a better and more accurate description—regardless of the fact that I was unjustly maligned by your Government in December 1941.[1] If I did not do so earlier, it was because of the apprehension in my mind that my letter might be relegated to an undeserved place. If I am doing so now, it is because I feel that the situation that confronts my country demands that I should banish sensitiveness from my mind and give expression to the thoughts surging within me.

I have had no opportunity in the past of discussing public affairs with Your Excellency. I have been quite content so far with the rôle of a back-bencher. But the time has come for back-benchers to speak out and, if possible, to act.

I am not a mystic; neither am I one of those fashionable internationalists who are always anxious to come into the limelight—big in talk but small in performance. I claim to be a realist and a nationalist—not of the type which says "my country right or wrong", nor of the type which subscribes to the "sacred principle of self-extermination", the ancient Christian principle of turning the other cheek, of which British diplomacy from 1933 to 1939 gives many illustrations. And, as a realist and a nationalist, I believe that my country can yet be saved from foreign aggression, saved not after a life and death struggle between Imperialists of different physical and political hues, but without such a struggle on Indian soil.

[1] Mr Sarat Chandra Bose had been interned under Defence of India Rule 26 on 11 December 1941. A Government of India communiqué issued at that time stated the Government were satisfied 'that there had been contacts of such a nature between him and the Japanese as to render his immediate apprehension necessary'.

In 1941 I did not entertain any serious apprehension in my mind that any foreign power would attempt to invade India. Nevertheless, having learnt the lessons of history and having noticed with consternation that British policy in recent years all the world over—in China, in Abyssinia, in Spain, in Australia [? Austria], in Czechoslovakia—had been to retreat before the aggressors and, in some cases, even to help them to their success, I felt it was the duty of the Government and the people of the country to make preparations in advance to resist foreign aggression and I said as much in some of the public statements I issued in the second half of that year. In 1942 foreign invasion seemed to be imminent but, fortunately, did not take place and India was spared the horrors of war. This year the danger of foreign invasion (if at all) seems to have receded into the background. But who can predicate with absolute certainty that the danger is wholly past and gone? The contemplated offensive against Japoccupied Burma may suddenly and without any warning lead to a counter-offensive against some part of this vast country of long distances. And I do not want India to be Ethelred the Unready as England undoubtedly was between 1933 and 1939.

There is one matter regarding which the rulers and the people of the country, at any rate the thinking section of it, are in agreement today, and that is, that foreign aggression must be resisted. The difference between them is as to the ways and means. I shall not pretend to be a friend of British Imperialism. I have never been one. All my life I have been its opponent; and no amount of imprisonment can crush that feeling within me. But if British Imperialism has so far blighted India's hopes and aspirations for freedom, Imperialism of the Nazi, Fascist and "Rising Sun" brands would, to my mind, prove much worse; and, speaking for myself, I am prepared to do whatever in me lies to prevent my country from coming under the latter's domination. For the last ten centuries India has been under some foreign domination or other; and her cup of bitterness is full. Speaking for myself and for men of my way of thinking, we do not wish to taste it any more, not to speak of exchanging it for something even more bitter; we would fain dash it to pieces if we can. History has taught us that during all these centuries whenever a foreign army landed on Indian soil, whatever its protestations, it almost invariably became an army of occupation; and we definitely do not want a repetition of the same experience. We shall continue our fight for India's independence as we have been doing for the last few decades; and we know and we feel it is easier for us to fight those whose ways and methods are not unknown to us.

I have after deep thinking formed my own ideas as to how my country can be saved from foreign aggression and how her independence can be made a reality in the very near future. I start with the declaration that was made in March last year[2] regarding Indian independence and India's right to frame her own constitution. But a mere declaration will fail, as it obviously has failed,

to rouse the people. Suitable steps have to be taken without further delay to satisfy the people and their leaders that the declaration is sincere and really meant to be implemented. It will not do merely to say that if Indians fight in the deserts of Africa or the fields of France or the rocky heights of Sicily they will be winning independence for India. Large promises were held out to India during the last Great War; but they have remained unfulfilled. The constitutions framed since then were mere mockeries of freedom. What the present situation in the country demands is that the people and their leaders should be made to feel that the pith and substance of independence has already come to them in action, the present constitution notwithstanding. I feel that a psychological change can be brought about in the mentality of the people and they can be galvanised into action if certain steps are taken immediately—not after framing a new constitution, but within the framework of the present constitution itself. The steel frame of the present constitution can be made flexible, if there is a genuine desire to bend it and adapt it to the imperative needs of India. If it is sought to maintain it in its pristine rigidity, disaster will overtake it, sooner or later; and that disaster will mean the ruination of all hopes of an understanding between India and Britain.

I wish it had been possible within the compass of a letter to give expression to the ideas I have formed and to enunciate the steps which, to my mind, ought to be taken forthwith to resolve the present discontent in India and to resist foreign aggression, if any. They have to be placed in some detail before Your Excellency. Moreover, to serve the purpose for which they are intended, they have to be discussed in all their bearings. Discussion often brings out alternative suggestions which prove to be even better than the original ones. Will Your Excellency give me a hearing and the opportunity of a discussion before you leave our shores? I am making a request the like of which I never made before, because I feel confident that I shall be able to awaken the people to a sense of realities and, what is even more important, to harness for collective action workers belonging to divers political groups who count in India's national life—workers who have no personal axes to grind, who have lived and suffered in order that India may be free.

Some people may din it into your ears—I have no doubt they will—that I am out of court because one of my younger brothers is reported to have gone over to the enemy. So has John Amery, if one is to believe newspaper reports. But his father the Right Hon'ble Mr. L. S. Amery is not suspect on that account; he still continues to be the Secretary of State for India. According to the old mosaic law the sins of parents were visted on their children, but not *vice versa*; and I do not know of any law, *neo-mosaic* or otherwise, which visits penalties on a person for the opinions and acts of those who are *sui juris* and over whom he has no control. Then it may be said that I ought to be treated as an untouchable,

[2] Vol. I, No. 456.

because I happen to be a security prisoner. It is hardly necessary to answer the last point. History and, in particular, British history is replete with instances when persons who had been sentenced to suffer the highest penalty known to the law for acts of violence had been invited to participate in solemn and momentous discussions affecting the future of their country. And I cannot believe that an Indian Congressman who is only under preventive arrest and detention is or can be subject to greater disabilities.

I have to apologise for the length of this letter and more so, because I have not been able to do more than touch the fringe of the Indian question which has perplexed minds greater than my own. I shall conclude with the hope that this letter will receive from Your Excellency and your colleagues the consideration it may deserve.[3]

Yours truly,

SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

3 No reply to this letter has been traced in the India Office Records; but a formal reply was sent: see No. 70, para. 8.

51

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P & J/8/623: f 276

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *18 July 1943, 11.55 pm*
Received: 18/19 July, midnight

1532–S. Colville telephones that two letters were yesterday received from Gandhi both, I understand, addressed to Home Department: the first[1] some sixty (?pages) long with some sixty pages of appendices, on the Congress responsibility, the "Quit India" slogan etc. I understand that despite the length of this letter it contains not the slightest sign of any modification of Gandhi's attitude, and is characteristically (?logic)-chopping etc. I hope to receive full text in a day or two.

2. The second letter dated (? July 16th)[2] and addressed to Additional Secretary, Home Department runs as follows:—"Sir, I observe from daily papers that there is a persistent rumour going around that I have written to His Excellency the Viceroy withdrawing the A.I.C.C. resolution of August 8th last.[3] I observe too that much speculation is being built upon the rumour. I suggest that Government should issue a confutation of the rumour. For I have neither (? written) nor wish to withdraw resolution. My personal opinion is that resolution was only one the A.I.C.C. could have passed if Congress were to make any effective contribution to cause of human freedom which is involved in immediate independence of India. I am etc.".

3. Rumours to which Gandhi refers are rumours spread by various papers of little importance here, and subsequently taken up by *Hindu* of Madras, that Gandhi had written to me withdrawing A.I.C.C. resolution of August 8th last year; that matter had been considered in Council; and that I had referred the whole issue to Cabinet etc. Press were informed in reply to enquiries that there was no foundation for this, but that it was not proposed to advertise by issuing any *démenti*. There is of course no shadow of foundation for any of these suggestions. It is clear however that Gandhi has felt himself embarrassed by the suggestion that he has eaten his words, that he probably feels that this alleged recantation may play into the hands of those elements to the right of Congress which may be disposed to compromise, and that he thinks it important now to kill any such suggestion and make it clear that his position remains as before.

4. I was disposed at first to favour publication of Gandhi's short letter but on further consideration and after discussion with Maxwell, now think that wise course will be to acknowledge it politely but take no action on it and give it no publicity. Our position is after all that Gandhi remains cut off from the world unless and until resolution of last August is withdrawn and suitable guarantees for future good conduct given. Any reversal of this principle, whether tactically advantageous to us or not, would make its enforcement more difficult in future and might lead to undoing of the whole position. This point was recognised in dealing with Gandhi's recent letter to Lanlah [? Jinnah].[4] His present letter makes it quite clear that he has not the least intention of resiling from his earlier position and is indeed anxious to re-emphasise it. Whilst this is so he is not entitled to our assistance in contradicting rumours which are distasteful to him. To issue even a bare denial, as he asks, without publication of his letter, would provide kite-flyers with a ready means of drawing us in future since any rumours not denied would be regarded as true. If we did anything therefore we should have to publish the whole of the letter to make it clear that he was responsible. There is no advantage from our point of view in doing so at the moment, while his reiteration of his previous attitude might well tend (as Gandhi no doubt wants) to torpedo efforts of those who are now disposed to think of a compromise. Suggestion in the letter that he has not the authority to withdraw resolution might involve us in further argument as to desirability of allowing him to contact the Working Committee, though he

[1] Mr Gandhi's letter of 15 July 1943 to the Govt. of India, Home Dept. (written in reply to statements in Cmd. 6430 *Congress Party's Responsibility for the Disturbances in India 1942–43*) is printed in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) pp. 34–111. An extract is printed in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 276–87.

[2] A copy of this letter is on L/P&J/8/623: f 273. It is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 32.

[3] Vol. II, No. 470.

[4] See Vol. III, Nos. 691–5, 699, 701–3, 707–9, 712–14, 716, 719, 720–4.

makes no such suggestion himself (whether he can withdraw the resolution since he is still appointed generalissimo of Congress movement is to some extent a technical question; but there would of course be nothing in the world to prevent him from saying, if he wanted to, that further reflection had led him to decide to dissociate himself from it or to condemn it).

5. I have not overlooked the fact that publication of the letter, emphasising as it does Gandhi's continued intransigeance, might help us with public opinion in England and America. But it could equally well be used and perhaps with even deadlier effect if at any future time serious allegations were made that we had disregarded overtures from Gandhi signifying a change of heart, or that it was only his detention that prevented a compromise; and in that event the fact that we have not given publicity to a document so damaging to Gandhi would completely exonerate us from any charge of ill-faith in suppressing his letters.

6. In these circumstances and subject to your comments I would propose to treat letter as secret, arrange for a suitable acknowledgement to be sent, but [? make] no mention of its existence to my Council. I should be grateful for earliest possible reply.

7. There is nothing so far to show that Gandhi contemplated any immediate move in the direction of a fast etc., and line of his present letter is indeed to some extent inconsistent with his proposing to do so, on anniversary of his incarceration. You will by now have had my letter of July 5th[5] to Colville. Colville has since replied[6] agreeing with line taken in that letter and adding that there is no evidence at his end to show that there is the least foundation for rumours of a contemplated fast etc. on August 9th.

[5] No. 29. [6] No. 31.

52

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir H. Twynam (*Central Provinces and Berar*)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/64

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *18 July 1943*

My dear Twynam,

I should be very grateful for your help in a matter in which you will feel some surprise that I should trouble a busy Governor. But the issue is one of substantial importance, and I am very anxious to obtain on it the assistance of an outside mind, and of your wide experience in both the rural and the urban sides of the Indian set-up. Very briefly the position is that Cripps and certain of his friends,

with ultimately the assistance of Bevin, Minister of Labour, put to Amery and the Cabinet some little time ago certain suggestions for reconstruction and social betterment, &c. in this country.

2. When this matter came up first it was, I think, on the basis of a really substantial contribution by His Majesty's Government. In its final form the expenditure would fall essentially to be made by India, possibly with some minor contribution from His Majesty's Government. When the idea of a major contribution from His Majesty's Government was in the air, those responsible had I think in their mind the feeling that such a contribution would have a substantial "appeasement" value politically. Now that expenditure is to be primarily by India herself, the ground has changed somewhat, and the objective, as you will see, is rather the discharge of our duty to secure progress and development in India by such pressure and such stimuli as can be applied by the Viceroy, Governors, and the administrative machine. The scheme finally put to the Cabinet is set out in the Joint memorandum[1] by Cripps and Bevin, which is Enclosure 1 to the Secretary of State's letter of March 10th, 1943,[2] which I send herewith. That memorandum should be read with a memorandum[3] by Amery which is Enclosure 3 to the same letter, and with the very lucid and telling departmental memorandum[4] from the India Office which is Enclosure 2. The India Office memorandum is of great value as bringing out how much has been and is being done within our practical limitations, and as bringing out also the fact that the Section 93 governments have not been idle in these fields, and it goes some way to cover the points, or certain of them, taken by Cripps and Bevin.

3. When this scheme was first brought up in its original form, I felt very doubtful about it, for it seemed to me to be somewhat half-baked and to ignore a great many of the realities of the Indian position. Ideally, of course, we would all of us agree that many of the objectives of the scheme are quite excellent; and did conditions permit of it, was there enough money, and had we the constitutional and the administrative set-up here to help us, there would be a great deal to be said for going ahead. But I am in fact, with the best will in the world, very sceptical as to the likelihood in existing conditions in India, of much substantial progress on the lines suggested being possible. I am frankly profoundly uneasy at the possible pauperising effect on the rural areas of pouring out large sums of money, wherever they are found from, for certain of the objects in view. Nor can we overlook, in that connection, that while money is plentiful at the moment, the springs, if past experience is any guide, are likely to dry up very suddenly once the war comes to an end. Sporadic efforts are bound to be useless and may indeed be very damaging.

[1] i.e. Enclosure to No. 276 in Vol. III. [2] Vol. III, No. 574.
[3] Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 356. [4] See Vol. III, No. 114, note 1.

Unless improvements are nursed and supported with persistence and over a long period of time, they are not likely to take deep root in the countryside, or to become part of traditional practice. I have not the least doubt, either, so far as any material contribution by His Majesty's Government is concerned, that many of the beneficent activities towards which people are still well disposed at the moment will shrivel up in the flame of our post-war indigence, and with the necessity for reducing the burden on the United Kingdom tax-payer if we are to keep our proper place in the world. A minor complication is that, to the extent that India's sterling accumulations were drawn on, we might be misrepresented as endeavouring to feed British markets with orders to be set against those sterling accumulations with the object of reducing His Majesty's Government's indebtedness to India. It is very easy, again, to talk of the benefits of education without considering how the persons to benefit by it are going to be provided for afterwards. And both in the educational and in the general field I doubt greatly if the Cabinet realise how extraordinarily short we are of trained personnel, whether European or Indian, and that down to a very low level indeed. You cannot improvise trained personnel in a night; and a great deal of such trained personnel as we have, particularly in the educational field, I should have thought of very doubtful quality. So far as immediate activity in the countryside, such as building of roads, bridges, &c. is concerned, steel for girders, transport, labour, and even material (cement, &c.) are all of them at a premium at the moment, and the demand is not likely to diminish till we get further on with the war in the Far East. Lastly, one has got to keep the States a little in mind in this sort of business. There is already a pretty sharp lag between the *general* level in the States and that in British India. While, however great the practical difficulties of controlling expenditure of large sums of money provided by the Centre on new works in the Provinces (and preventing those large sums from being used for purely political purposes as Congress tried a few years ago to use rural development grants), the difficulties of any effective control in the case of the States are infinitely greater. And I am bound to say that I am unmoved by the suggestion that any generosity in these matters by the United Kingdom, or any lavish expenditure of money by the Centre from the revenues of India, would be likely to have any political effect such as would strengthen or ease the position of Government in this country that matters. I should expect myself any assistance given to be taken as a right rather than anything else; I should be surprised if we got any thanks for it; and so far as money from the United Kingdom was concerned, we might quite well find ourselves open to the suggestion that this was conscience money and very overdue at that.

4. With every anxiety therefore to forward any scheme that seems practically possible and that has any hope of being carried out (and these are many of them

long-range schemes) over the requisite period of years, I am myself regretfully driven to doubt whether the scheme put forward by Cripps and Bevin is practical politics. I am anxious, however, for every reason, to the extent that I may have to express a view against it, to let the Cabinet have as constructive and as temperate a criticism as I can, and to base any such criticism solidly on practical considerations. Equally, I need not say, so far as particular features of the scheme may seem to hold out greater hope of being adopted or adapted, I should be very anxious to turn them to any possible use and should of course wish to make that clear in my reply. But the responsibility of advising is a heavy one. A false step may lead us very well off the road and may be extremely expensive for our successors to retrace. And I feel bound in duty, therefore, to test these propositions very carefully.

5. It is in connection with the framing of my case for the Cabinet that I should so much welcome any help that you can give me. I have discussed the position in considerable detail with Raisman, Gregory, and other of my Advisers here. I have had from them in the outcome the two alternative drafts[5] of telegrams to the Secretary of State which I send herewith, and which, as you will see, in certain respects differ more in presentation than in their general approach. There is a great deal of meat in these telegrams, particularly in the longer one. Yet, I confess that I am not really quite happy with either, and one principal reason is that I do not think that either does justice to the rural aspects of the problem, with their difficulties and complexities, or to the possible disastrous effect on rural economy and on the rural position of the wholesale adoption of certain features of the scheme; and I should much like to see an assessment of the pros and cons, so far as the rural position is concerned, framed in a more telling manner by someone with greater experience of the background of the countryside than is immediately available to me here among my principal Advisers.

6. Let me add that though the draft telegrams which I enclose touch on the post-war political position (cf. paragraph 9 of the shorter telegram) I would not myself think it wise or necessary in any reply that I may send to

[5] The second and shorter of these drafts, prepared by Lt.-Gen. Sir T. Hutton, was identical with the draft in No. 48 above. The first draft, prepared by Sir J. Raisman and Sir T. Gregory, argued in its first 4 paras. that government action in the social and economic field was likely to have little if any favourable political repercussions; that spectacular short term results could not be expected from the suggested policies, and that Indian financial and constitutional limitations ought not to be forgotten. In paras. 5–9 the authors feared that increased expenditure might lead to waste rather than development; that a British contribution to a proposed Indian Research and Development fund would prove embarrassing to the Finance Department and that measures to train Indians in Britain were to be preferred to sending skilled personnel to India. In the concluding paras. (11–15) certain objections were raised to the suggested I.L.O. Eastern Regional Conference; and the obstacles to industrialisation and saving were stressed as was the paramount emphasis which had then to be placed on the war. MSS. EUR. F. 125/64.

Amery to get entangled in post-war possibilities: for which reason I am shy of the suggestion in paragraph 9 of the shorter draft that the post-war position may have to be viewed in terms of coalition governments in this country. I recognise that the post-war constitutional position here is of first-class importance in its relevance to the matter we are now discussing. But that indeed is one of the difficulties of this scheme: for I greatly doubt our being in a position yet, or for some time to come, to form any just estimate of what the post-war constitutional position, or the post-war relations of Great Britain and India are likely to be.

7. Nor, on a different but very important point which is touched on both in the Cripps-Bevin memorandum and in both of the drafts, am I at all optimistic as to our being able to get any substantial number of experts from home. His Majesty's Government are bound to be under very heavy pressure; and there is any amount of reconstruction work to be done in other Empire countries and on the Continent consequent on the end of the war. I see no reason, however, why we should not try to get what can be spared to us, and if there are men of good quality, and the requisite experience, who are willing to serve in India, I would not myself be unduly worried by the argument against finding jobs for a number of Europeans.

8. But I need not weary you with any lengthy examination of specific points or general issues arising out of these memoranda. The request which I should like to put to you for your consideration is that you would be good enough to help me by framing a review on the basis of the material which I send herewith (the original memoranda received from Amery and the drafts which I have had from my Advisers), which would deal with the matter on slightly broader lines than those drafts, and would also in particular deal with the rural aspects of it. Whatever I say to the Cabinet I would wish to put up as representing not merely the personal views of the Governor-General of the day, but as a considered appreciation based on the reactions of many different minds among those to whose experience and judgment I attach importance in this country. I would like to make my presentation as impersonal as possible, though I would of course associate myself with its conclusions, and would probably wish, in various ways, to amplify particular aspects myself. I am very conscious of the burdens you have yourself to carry, and I would not trouble you with this unusual request were it not that I am also well aware of your interest in the general question—an interest which I feel may not only make you care to glance through these memoranda and these drafts, but may also suggest to you a variety of very valuable points which could be embodied in a general presentation of the case such as I could pass on to Amery and the Cabinet. And if you feel able to help me over it, I need not say how grateful I shall be and how much additional weight would attach

to my views from the fact that they had behind them not merely the perhaps somewhat specialist experience of my technical experts and other Advisers in the Government of India, but of a Provincial Governor with the wide and varied experience, and the knowledge of the Provincial background, of yourself.

Yours sincerely,
LINLITHGOW

53

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *19 July 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letters of the 28th June[1] and 5th July,[2] which arrived together and which I have been very glad to get. I think the position about the South East Asia Command is now a good deal clearer at any rate in its general outline, and I hope that the material[3] which I have sent you as the result of discussion here by the Chief with his advisers, and with Raisman by myself, will help to clear the air. Though I think that Auchinleck, as I hinted in my last letter, was not altogether enthusiastic in the early stages, he has played up very well indeed, and I am sure you will agree that the answer we have sent represents a real effort on his part, and on the part of those working with him here to give all the help we can in the elaboration and execution of the new arrangements. I know that he has made it clear to G.H.Q. and to the War Department, that they must co-operate, and that at every level. I feel increasingly as I look at these new arrangements that they are going to call, as you and I have both felt before, for the greatest tact and discretion on the part of those concerned if friction is to be avoided. But the main thing is goodwill on both sides, and given it local difficulties should admit of being surmounted. You will have seen Raisman's important contribution in so far as finance is concerned. Here again we are dealing with matters of first-class significance from the point of view of this country, and of great complexity; and the working out of the details is going to matter a great deal.

2. I am indeed thankful that you have been able to head Winston off this idea of a Ministerial Assistant to the Viceroy, who would take over the munitions factories! I cannot think what can have put that into his mind, and wholly agree with your criticism of it. All, as I see it, that the Viceroy, acting in his personal capacity as agent to His Majesty's Government, will need is a very

[1] No. 21. [2] No. 28. [3] Tels. 1504–7S of 16 July. L/PO/4/24: ff 488–92.

small but high quality office which will be able to maintain liaison with those persons and functions for which he is to exercise this delegated responsibility, and to do such drafting, &c. for him on that side as may be requisite. We shall have to make it clear, incidentally, that any such arrangement does not constitute part of the normal *personal* staff of the Viceroy, or else there will be complications. I am quite clear myself that (as in the parallel case of the official departments of the Governor-General's Secretariat) they must live outside the Viceroy's House, and that so far as the mechanics are concerned, papers, &c. would, where not brought personally, come up in the ordinary way through the Private Secretary to the Viceroy of the day. There would be dangers in any other arrangement. That is of course wholly consistent with the view which you, rightly if I may say so, have taken that whoever is in charge of this organisation must be directly under the Viceroy of the day in his extra-statutory capacity.

3. I dare say that there will be more difficulty about the choice of the Supreme Commander. I rather read Roosevelt's telegram[4] as meaning that the Americans were more or less determined on principle to jib at whatever name we might first suggest to them and to endeavour to establish themselves in a stronger position as regards acceptance or rejection of individuals.

4. I need not say how glad I am, also, that you were able, as mentioned in paragraph 2 of your letter of the 5th July, to convince people of the objections to a zone in Eastern India under the Supreme Commander, and that the operational requirements of the Supreme Commander should be met by arrangement between himself and the Government of India authorities.

5. I was glad to read, in paragraph 4 of your letter of the 5th July, what you say about the position of the Commander-in-Chief in relation to Council. I am interested, too, in your own anticipation of the lines which development is likely to follow. I feel myself that it is rather early days to form any very firm impression on that question. But I am entirely with you in feeling that certainly while the war is on it is essential that the Commander-in-Chief should be a Member of the Council; and it is of course a satisfaction to me to feel that you agree with the view I expressed to Auchinleck that this is a matter not for the individual predilection of the Commander-in-Chief of the day, but for the Viceroy and the War Cabinet at the time.

[Para. 6, on appointments to Wavell's staff; and para. 7, on Linlithgow's homecoming, omitted.]

8. You are quite right in thinking that politically the position is very easy here at the moment. The fact is that none of these people know what to do. The Muslim League have no wish to do anything, the Congress are completely at a loss; the Princes, Depressed Classes, and the minorities, have nothing to

gain by activity; and while the Mahasabha are very anxious to take over the Congress chair they are not really well-organised or authoritative enough to be able to do so. I shall be very surprised if Jinnah takes any wider view of the constitutional problem. He has everything to gain by letting things remain precisely as they are but continuing to direct his arrows at the government of the day. And though one is bound to admit that after his management of the Gandhi letter affair there is more ground for hope than before that he might pan out better than expected, his curse unfortunately is personal vanity, which at his age he is not likely to shake off.

9. You will by now have had my telegram[5] about Gandhi's latest letters. I have not yet received this immense document[6] which Colville reports that he has compiled, about Congress responsibility, &c.—it ought to reach Delhi today or tomorrow. Colville says that it represents no change of heart whatever, and that it is entirely consistent with the attitude taken up in Gandhi's letter to the Home Department, the text of which I have telegraphed to you. I shall be interested to see your reaction on the matter of publication. My own first inclination, and I think also Maxwell's, was to publish. But on thinking it over and for the reasons set out in my telegram, we changed our minds, and reached the conclusion that it would be better to confine ourselves to a polite acknowledgement. It is quite clear that the Mahatma is beginning to feel a little of the breeze. He sees signs of activity outside—people like Munshi and so on, and the Mahasabha, endeavouring to manœuvre themselves on to the platform; this rumour that he had cancelled the August Resolution of last year is damaging to himself to the extent that it suggests a climb down and a victory for government; and while all this is going on he finds himself immured at Poona and with no possibility of figuring in the limelight. So far there is nothing to suggest a fast, or any definite action of that type, and he would be on pretty bad ground if he were to fast merely because we had not given publicity to this present letter of his. But the longer he remains shut up and unable to take any active part in politics, the worse it is for the Congress, and the more their stock goes down; and if the anniversary of the rebellion of last year passes without any move by him I shall feel that we have very definitely scored.

[Para. 10, on Sir S. Runganadhan; and para. 11, on a proposed Red Cross Order, omitted.]

12. In paragraph 5 of your letter of the 5th July you touched on this question of the Indianisation of Council. If there is any further material which you would like me to let you have, interim, on that subject let me know and I will produce it. I agree of course that the decision is one that falls to be taken by

[4] See No. 21, note 2. [5] No. 51. [6] See No. 51, note 1.

Wavell and yourself after Wavell has taken over and found his feet. But equally, because of the various consequential arrangements involved, I would like to suggest that it might be worth while to try and clear the ground, without of course taking any decision, so far as possible in advance. One aspect of the matter has been brought rather prominently to my notice by Raisman, who has just been sounding me as to what our intentions are in regard to him, and in particular whether the idea is that he should continue to serve as Finance Member after the expiry of his present term. I told him that I could give no indication whatever, and that the decision would not be for me. He quite accepts that, but represents that an early decision (I suppose before the end of the year) is of very considerable importance, first because of the difficulties of working with authority to a particular financial policy over inflation, sterling balances, and all the rest of it, with Indian financial and political interests, and with the Reserve Bank, when the expectation of all concerned may be that after April next he will no longer be in charge and that there may be an opportunity, particularly if there is an Indian Finance Member, of securing radical changes of policy. Secondly, because, were he to stay on he would I gather probably feel (and I would warmly support him in this if he did) the need for a short break, and a variety of consequential arrangements have to be considered. I do not take all this as of decisive seriousness, though Raisman's first point is material: but it all shows that, as we have so often found in the past, these are decisions that one has to work up to over a good many months before, and I am sure that both over the Finance Membership and over the Home Membership, there is a great deal to be said for provisional conclusions as early as they can conveniently be reached. I would like again very strongly to commend to you and to Wavell the suggestion I have already put to you, that we should take Twynam out of the Central Provinces and make him Home Member. I am sure that with his experience and balance he would be a tower of strength, and as an ex-Governor of two Provinces and a very experienced Chief Secretary he would be in a position to speak with the requisite authority inside Council itself. I am confident, too, that Wavell would find in Twynam a most wise and loyal adviser in many matters of administration, whenever he chose to consult him; for there is no more informed or better balanced mind in India today.

13. I am sorry to have been so long in letting you have anything definite on the Cripps-Bevin memorandum. But you can hardly imagine the continuous pressure under which one is working here; and I have been seriously handicapped in dealing with the Cripps-Bevin proposals by the shortage of people at Headquarters who really understand the rural side of this business. I may indeed claim probably to understand it myself better than any of them; but it is impossible for me to set aside several hours to try to work up the case on the rural side in the light of my own familiarity with and experience of it.

I telegraphed,[7] so that you might have something on which to base your discussions with Wavell and Mudaliar, one of the departmental drafts put up to me, though I have entered certain caveats as regards particular propositions contained in it. I think that you ought also to see, and I send you by this bag, a copy of the alternative draft,[8] proposed to me by Raisman and Gregory, for it contains, though not in a form with which I should have wished to associate myself, a great deal of very solid matter indeed. Jenkins has interesting ideas on this business and let me have some comments[9] on it before he went home, which I sent you at the time. I think myself they are rather on the optimistic side, but they are very useful. What Cripps and Bevin seem to fail to realise is that a great deal of what they are recommending is in the field which was deliberately transferred to Indian control by Parliament 25 years ago, and for the most part to Indian control in the Provincial field. The results have been depressing in the highest degree, but the control has passed from our hands very largely. Secondly, that the proposal now is that very large sums of money should be spent on these matters, but out of Indian revenues and by the Government of India. You may be certain that the Government of India, even if it does still retain a European percentage, is very unlikely to take kindly to detailed suggestions from the Cabinet for the expenditure of its own balances on matters most intimately associated with the social and economic background here, particularly when the practical objections to many of those suggestions as seen from this end are so decisive. But I recognise that that is not a proposition that you can state in its glaring nakedness in the Cabinet or to Cripps and Bevin! I am trying to get a slightly different review together which I will telegraph to you when it is complete. Meanwhile, I hope that the material in the departmental drafts, and particularly in Raisman's draft, will be of use to you in dealing with Cabinet pressure. I thought the India Office departmental memorandum a very good one, for it brings out forcibly the amount that has already been done and the limitations subject to which we have to operate here.

[Para. 14, on the intensified savings drive; and para. 15, on Mr. Pilditch's future arrangements, omitted.]

16. I think it well to send you by this bag a complete set of the correspondence I have had, by telegram and letter, with Dow, about his revenue settlement proposals.[10] I have sent you a telegram[11] briefly recapitulating the

[7] No. 48. [8] See No. 52, note 5. [9] Vol. III, No. 668.

[10] See No. 35, para. 11. On 12 July the Sind Legislative Assembly refused to discuss the revenue settlement proposals. At a Cabinet meeting on 15 July, the ministry agreed to stand by the proposals but opposed certain modifications on which the Governor insisted. In his letter of 17 July to Lord Linlithgow, Sir H. Dow alleged that a reason why one of his modifications was objected to was that it applied to the Minister of Revenue [Khan Bahadur Khuhro]'s 'own best lands . . . and it was clear to all that he was merely fighting for the reduction of the assessment which he would himself have to pay'. MSS. EUR. F. 125/99.

[11] Not printed.

position which will I hope have put you in the picture. The story is a most unedifying one, and Dow's last letter of the 17th July shows very clearly how little public spirit and how little disinterestedness one can look for in this country even on the part of responsible Ministers. I think that Dow, whose knowledge and experience of this Province are very great and whose personality is a strong one, is to be congratulated on having stood firm. I hope very much that we shall not have any awkward ministerial repercussions. But I should doubt whether we would, if only because the Ministers must realise that the only effective alternative to themselves in Sind at the moment is Section 93, and that were they to resign and to go into Section 93, those very concessions which they have so selfishly stood out for over the revenue settlement would be bound to disappear.

[Para. 17, on the correct channel for correspondence on the Bengal budget *impasse*, omitted.]

18. You will have seen a copy of the statement[12] to the press issued a few days ago by a group of missionaries of British nationality. I have had in connection with it from Dr. McKenzie of the Wilson College, Bombay, under the letter, dated 14th July,[13] of which I send you a copy, a copy of a letter[14] which he has, he says, sent confidentially to a few friends at home. That letter is a very good one, though I think the arguments break down towards the end, where Dr. McKenzie comes back to the usual suggestion that as nothing is likely to happen on the Indian side His Majesty's Government are the only people who are in a position to make a move, and that they could afford to make one. On that I am frankly unconvinced as you know, though I have the highest respect for Dr. McKenzie. But I am turning over in my mind the desirability of inviting some of these gentlemen to visit Delhi and have a talk with Maxwell. If they did and if Dr. McKenzie was among their number, I would very readily have a word with him myself. At the same time, while Dr. McKenzie's letter is a very balanced and carefully worded statement, I am left a little with the feeling as I read the statement issued to the press that while the object of the signatories, or most of them, in compiling these documents may have been the belief and hope that they might lead to something constructive, it might very well be the case that, possibly subconsciously, the documents are the result of a feeling among the missionaries that if they and their missions are to continue to exist in India after the war it is necessary that they should give tangible proof to Indians that the churches are not silent supporters of any "reactionary" policy on the part of Great Britain. I am not at all sure that it would not be a good thing to arrange for a distribution among them of copies of Coupland's book,[15] but I will turn that over in my mind.

Very sticky here now, but a nice rain today and the countryside is delightfully green.

[12] This statement expressed concern that the methods of friendly consultation for the preparation of plans for self-government had broken down in India. It urged that all parties should agree to enter into unrestricted conference with a view to discovering whether their differences were irreconcilable; that the representative body proposed in the Cripps scheme should be convened immediately; and that the government should consider granting an amnesty to political prisoners. MSS. EUR. F. 125/125.

[13] *Ibid.*

[14] The letter began by expressing the view that, 'unless God raises up in India men of greater wisdom and greater unselfishness than those who in recent years have been directing the thought, and still more the feeling, of the people, I cannot see how India can escape great suffering'. It continued: 'the real root of the trouble is to be found in the fact that Congress under the leadership of Mr. Gandhi has been giving all its energy to the stirring of the passion for freedom, and none to the far more important and difficult task of planning for freedom or preparing the people for using it.' After briefly recapitulating constitutional developments since 1909, it gave reasons for rejecting 'the idea that the Congress represents the mind of the whole Indian nation'. The letter proposed that the constitution-making body provided for in the Cripps scheme should be summoned forthwith, and a date say three or five years after the end of the war, should be fixed for British withdrawal from India. This suggestion might 'appear quite mad', but the alternatives—a reversion to 'authoritarian rule' or the imposition of a British-made constitution—were even more impracticable. Though complete independence seemed incompatible with national unity, the British Government should make one more effort to reach a settlement. *Ibid.*

[15] Sir R. Coupland, *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, 3 Parts (London, Oxford University Press, 1942–3).

54

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/P&J/8/617: f 4

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *20 July 1943, 8 pm*

PERSONAL

16139. Your personal telegram 18th July 1532–S.[1] You will no doubt let me have your views or comments on Gandhi's 60-page letter in due course.

2. As regards shorter letter I agree with your conclusion that it should merely be acknowledged that no action should be taken to comply with its request and consequently that it should *not* be published.

3. As regards difficult question of informing your Council I should have thought that as matter of principle and in view of possibility contemplated in para. 5 of eventual publication (which might create grievance on part of some Members of having been kept in dark at material stage) there was a case for informing your colleagues of incident in general terms. But if you have

[1] No. 51.

serious apprehension that this would leak out and breed further and possibly more inconvenient crop of rumours, I should agree that it would be expedient to treat matter as departmental and *not* of concern to Council as a whole.

4. Your para. 7: I note that Colville agrees[2] with your letter of July 5th[3] and I shall be interested to learn views of other Governors.

[2] See No. 31. [3] No. 29.

55

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

CONFIDENTIAL "BARNES COURT", SIMLA, *20 July 1943*

No. 460.

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

Will Your Excellency kindly refer to your confidential letter of July the 16th, 1943,[1] about suggestions that have been made to the effect that the Punjab Government is now inclined to give preferential treatment to Muslims at the expense of members of other communities? In my opinion there is no justification whatsoever for any such insinuation, nor, so far as I am aware, is there any ground for holding that the Governor, however much he may try to carry the Premier and the Ministry with him, has tended to shirk his special responsibilities in regard to the protection of minorities. It is of course true that there are attempts on the part of the Muslim League to exercise increased pressure on the Ministry and that Khizar is in some respects in a weaker position than his predecessor. But for this, as Your Excellency is aware, Sikander is very largely to blame, as the surrenders which he made, sometimes unnecessarily, to Jinnah have left his successor an unpleasant heritage. It is also true that comments in the Press from time to time seek to give the impression that a particular community is being treated with unfairness or injustice; Hindu, Sikh and Muslim newspapers all like to indulge in this habit, however flimsy the excuse. I do not know whether Your Excellency's interviewers have made any specific allegations, but should this be the case, I will of course be glad to supply any information that may be required. My own experience leads me to the view, which I have reason to believe is shared by senior European officers in the Punjab, that Khizar has shown no kind of communal partiality in regard to appointments. I think in fact that he is singularly free from communal bias. Perhaps it is worth while mentioning one instance, the only occasion on which, so far as I remember, I have had any serious difficulty in regard to an undue preference shown by the Ministry for a Muslim candidate.

This instance occurred in Sikander's time towards the end of last year. A very senior appointment in the Irrigation Branch was about to fall vacant and Chhotu Ram in sending up the file to Sikander suggested that they should both talk over the matter in the usual way with the Governor. Sikander, however, chose, strangely enough, to content himself with a discussion with Chhotu, and the result was that the papers came to me with a note saying they had come to the conclusion that the appointment should go to a certain Muslim officer. There was no doubt that this particular officer was unfitted for the post and I had to have a serious talk with Sikander on the subject. The question had not finally been decided by the time Sikander died. When Khizar took over there was no further difficulty; both he and Chhotu Ram agreed readily to the appointment of a European officer, who was obviously the right man for the post. I am not suggesting that Sikander was communally-minded, but I fear that his better judgment was at times overborne by pressure from outside.

As to the nervousness caused among Sikhs and other minority communities by the "Pakistan" slogan, I fear there is no doubt that a certain degree of uneasiness does exist both in non-official and official quarters. We have been very considerably embarrassed of late by certain untoward remarks made by Shaukat Hyat Khan in regard to "Pakistan" and the Muslim League in the course of his recent tour;[2] he has now been recalled to Simla and taken very sternly to task by Khizar, and he is now publishing an explanation in the Press which, though I am afraid it does not ring convincingly, may go some way towards counteracting the mischief that he has done.

I am sending you an appreciation[3] of the various members of the Ministry in which I have touched on this unpleasant incident.

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

[1] No. 49.

[2] At a meeting at Sheikhpura on 15 July, Captain Shaukat Hyat Khan declared he would carry out all mandates of the Muslim League and Mr Jinnah with a soldier-discipline and loyalty, shirking no danger or sacrifice. He further asserted that all elected representatives of Muslims in the Punjab Assembly were not only members of the League but had the same loyalty towards it as members of any political party. There was no question of conflict between League and Ministry, which had been formed by the leader of the Muslim League Party or in other words by the Muslim League itself. Later in the month he explained that he still supported the Jinnah–Sikander Pact, which formed the main background for his Sheikhpura speech. L/P&J/8/662.

[3] Not printed.

56

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *21 July 1943*

Dear Linlithgow,
This is my report for the first half of July. I enclose the Home Department report[1] for the same period.

2. *Food.*—I am seriously displeased at the remissness of my Civil Supply Department in appointing a Bengal Government representative on the Delhi Committee; and I sincerely hope that this laxity will not be taken as implying that the Bengal problem is not acute in the extreme. I have addressed you separately[2] on the subject of the policy of your Food Department. Rightly or wrongly, its recent orders are interpreted by my Ministry as a "let-down" of Bengal by the Central Government; and Suhrawardy, who, to do him justice, has shown untiring energy as well as enthusiasm, is clearly feeling very discouraged.

3. Starvation in the districts is on the increase. One trouble is that masses of beggars are boarding trains without tickets in the search for places where food may be available. They are a particular nuisance in areas where troops are concentrated, e.g. Chittagong; and, apart from being insanitary, constitute a danger to security. I understand that the Area Commander is asking the railways to be more severe on this type of "ticketless travel", but we all know how difficult it is for railways to cope with it. Lane's account of the overcrowding in third-class carriages on the Chittagong line was quite horrifying.

[1] Not printed. [2] No. 27.

57

Dr B. S. Moonje to a correspondent in Delhi (Extract)[1]

MSS. EUR. F. 125/156

NASIK, *21 July 1943*

As for the policy of the Hindu Mahasabha, I say as follows:

(1) That we have no faith in and are opposed to Non-Co-operation and Non-Violence, which forms the creed of the Congress.

We believe in what is known as Responsive Co-operation, that is, actual contact and struggle with our opponents. Similarly we believe in violence,

organised scientifically on modern European methods, and we also believe that Swaraj will not be attained without violent struggles when the time comes. In short we believe in Responsive Co-operation which includes all this and also Non-Co-operation when it will suit to achieve our ends.

(2) That thus we are prepared to co-operate with actually the Devil, what to say of Britishers or the Moslems; our only condition is that such co-operation should suit to achieve our ends.

(3) That our co-operation with the Moslems is not of the same kind as that of the Congress, Congress believes that Swaraj cannot be attained without the co-operation of the Moslems. We believe that, when time will come, we can win Swaraj even in spite of the Moslem opposition. The Congress therefore surrenders to the Moslems and its co-operation with the Moslems is merely another word for surrender. Our co-operation is manly and fruitful, though it assumes different colours according to different circumstances in different Moslem–Majority Provinces. I hope I have made my position clear.

Responsive Co-operation = { *Struggle with our opponents;*
Non-Co-operation;
Violence.

This is worth remembering.

L. 29/7/43

[1] Only this extract is in MSS. EUR. F. 125/156. It was submitted by Mr Pilditch for information on 27 July.

58

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 274

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *26 July 1943, 5.21 pm*
PERSONAL *Received: 26 July, 5.15 pm*

No. 1572–S. Your personal telegram of July 20th 16139.[1] Gandhi. Many thanks. I am sending copy of 60 page letter by bag of July 27th, and will have it examined here.

2. As regards shorter letter I am glad that we are in agreement. I have not yet finally made up my mind about Council, but on the whole am still disposed to say nothing to them about it in view of danger of rumours getting out.

[1] No. 54.

3. But I have been considering, relating to my decision on that point, every possible parliamentary question to you by Sorensen, etc., based on rumours that have been circulating in Indian press that there has been a letter from Gandhi. It would hardly I imagine if you had such a question be possible for you to avoid it and I should naturally be concerned to let my Council know first if there was to be any question of admission in Parliament that a letter had been received or was under consideration.

4. In the event of a question being put down it might I suppose either be:—

(a) "Has a letter been received from Gandhi resiling from position taken up in August Resolution and/or withdrawing that Resolution".

I should see no difficulty in your replying no to such a question; nor would it be necessary for me to say anything to Council. But a more probable line I imagine would be:—

(b) "Has any recent communication been received from Mr. Gandhi and if so to what effect".

In that event reply which I should be disposed to suggest would be:—"Letters from time to time [are] received on variety of topics from Mr. Gandhi, but I am not prepared to disclose their number or contents". You alone can judge whether House would accept that, but I should have hoped that they would. If pressed as to our reasons for not divulging their contents, etc., fact that Gandhi is under detention in circumstances and for reasons of which the House is well aware, as that it is the policy while he remains in detention and has not called off the August Resolution, etc., to deny him propaganda publicity, could no doubt be urged. We are on strong ground in taking (? line) suggested since following communications have passed with Gandhi over last two months:—

(a) Letter dated May 4th[2] asking Government to trace [? forward] his letter to Jinnah.
(b) Letter to Tottenham of May 27th[3] regretting our decision and asking us to alter text of our communiqué on Gandhi-Jinnah correspondence.
(c) Letter dated May 28th[4] to Home Department expressing surprise that communiqué had been published before his previous letter had reached us.
(d) Letter to Maxwell of May 21st, to which Maxwell replied, and in reply to which an acknowledgement (copy sent you by bag of June 26th 1943) was received by Maxwell.[5]
(e) Letter dated May 15th[6] asking Home Department to (? forward) his letter to Lord Samuel.
(f) Letter dated June 1st,[7] protesting against refusal to forward letter to Samuel.
(g) His letter of July 16th[8] now under discussion, and his 60 page letter of July 16th.[9]

I should welcome your reaction. Practically all if not all the correspondence referred to in preceding paragraph has been sent to you either by Home Department or through personal channel.

[2] Not printed in Vol. III. See *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), p. 14.
[3] Vol. III, No. 759. [4] See Vol. III, No. 759, note 6.
[5] This exchange of letters is not printed. See *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 17–24.
[6] See Vol. III, No. 710.
[7] Not printed in Vol. III. See *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, p. 31. [8] See No. 51.
[9] See No. 51, note 1.

59

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *26 July 1943*
Received: 27 July

No. 16683. Your personal telegram of July 15th, No. 1497-S.[1] Wheat. Matter is under urgent consideration but there are many factors involved and I fear a decision by August 2nd cannot be looked for.

2. I fear I cannot hold out much hope of an early decision in favour of programme you ask for namely 500,000 tons over six months from September next. There are however some uncertain factors not capable of being cleared up immediately which if they turn out favourably would greatly improve our prospects. Assuming that we cannot at present see our way clear to a programme of or approaching 500,000 tons over the period what in your judgement having regard to other measures in hand for dealing with inflationary situation and factors such as seasonal conditions would be the most effective time for concentrating such shipments as are possible? There appears in any case to be no possibility of ships being in position to make supplies available to you as early as September. With reference to your last sentence what have you in mind as figure below which shipments would do more harm than good.

[1] No. 39.

60

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/64

No. 163–G.C.P. *26 July 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

As desired in Your Excellency's letter dated the 18th July 1943,[1] I enclose herewith a review of the Notes on Social and Economic Policy in India enclosed with Your Excellency's letter; I have dealt particularly with the suggestion that a memorandum should be communicated to the new Viceroy expressing the wish of His Majesty's Government for a forward social programme in India and that the Viceroy should mobilise Provincial and all-India support for such a programme.

The subject, of course, lends itself to lengthy treatment and could be exhaustively dealt with by each Province. I feel however that Your Excellency would not desire me to delay the matter unduly and I have consequently confined myself to the points which strike me most forcibly.

It will be seen that the conclusion that I have reached is to the same effect as the one arrived at by Your Excellency's Government. I have perhaps stated my views rather forcefully and trust that I have not been too categorical.

Yours sincerely,

H. J. TWYNAM

Enclosure to No. 60

REVIEW OF NOTES ON A PROGRESSIVE SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY IN INDIA

While the war is still on, there will be no opportunity (for reasons which will appear later) for effective implementation of a policy of social and industrial development. Any loud-pedalling of such a policy now will not only be represented in the Press and on the platform as an attempt to burke the issue of constitutional development but may indeed expose the new Viceroy to misrepresentation from the start. At best, the Indian public will regard such a programme with indifference and the theme will be reiterated by the Congress that a constitutional settlement is what is wanted and not doses of "soothing syrup". It will be said that the Indian people are themselves quite capable of tackling these or indeed any other domestic problems if only the British are willing to part with power. It will be claimed further that Indians themselves are far better qualified to set their own house in order than any foreigners can possibly be, however well-meaning. The Indian intelligentsia do not in any way suffer from an inferiority complex as regards their administrative capacity.

This confidence may well be misplaced in the opinion of observers with wider experience, but it will be useless to say so, and any suggestion that Britishers can teach Indians their business will be hotly resented as a reflection on Indian qualifications for "Independence". The rejoinder may be made that adverse political reactions in India do not constitute a justification for not proceeding with measures designed to remove the poverty, ignorance and ill-health which do admittedly still characterise the Indian scene. But it would be useless attempting anything in the nature of a "five-years" plan without the goodwill and active help of Indian political parties and especially Indian Provincial Legislatures within whose domain, as has been rightly pointed out, the subject matter of social progress and industrial development chiefly lies.

It is very doubtful whether Indian Legislators will approach the problems set forth from the same angle as the Cripps-Bevin Note.[2] They would assuredly resent "a new and powerful stimulus" which did not accord with their own views while their immediate response to an appeal would be a demand for more money.

2. Whatever constitutional developments may occur, it can safely be said that for some considerable period the Legislatures in Hindu Provinces will largely represent the view-point of the Indian intelligentsia. In Moslem Provinces, where the constitution is still functioning, the Legislatures will want to determine their own line of progress. Moslem society is, of course, democratic in a very real sense and Moslem legislators are probably far more representative of the cultivating masses than Hindu legislators. But the former, often for quite different reasons, are no more likely to accept without question the policy outlined in the Cripps-Bevin memorandum than the latter; in any event, the ultimate decision in all Provinces must largely rest with the Legislative Assemblies. How little the view-point of the Indian masses can hope to be represented can be seen by reference to the Electoral Rules of many Provinces which prescribe the signs with which ballot boxes are to be adorned so that the electorate may be able to identify the candidates. It is clear that no [*sic*] such an electorate is largely inarticulate; indeed experience indicates that the contact between the electorate and its representatives is of the most tenuous and ephemeral description. Although this serious defect in the Indian set-up may be condoned when considering the question of political advancement, it must be reckoned with as a factor when considering a policy of social and economic development.

The intelligentsia in the Hindu Provinces is and will remain under the influence of the philosophy of Wardha so long as Gandhi remains alive. That philosophy has been described as Tolstoyan. It has little regard for social progress and industrial development as envisaged by progressive thought in

[1] No. 52. [2] See Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 276; also No. 544, note 2 in that Vol.

Europe and America. After Gandhi's death it seems highly probable that the Big Business element in the working committee, which even now has considerable influence over Gandhi, will take charge of the Congress organisation. This element is largely orthodox Hindu and has little or no use for rationalism. It would certainly have no use for a campaign in favour of birth control, and indeed the very idea of a Government investigation into such a subject would be condemned, both in Hindu and Moslem Provinces, as shocking and would evoke hot passion while giving scope for a most dangerous misrepresentation of Government's intentions. It is unfortunately only too true that the "Malthusian Devil" is at large in India and no big improvement in the standard of living can be expected until it is laid. It is, however, essential to remember that there are social and religious sanctions and inhibitions which militate against the adoption of birth control. There are signs that the younger generation is taking some interest in the subject which is now occasionally discussed in the Press but not perhaps always from laudable motives. It can safely be said that this is certainly a problem which must be left to Indians themselves to take up. From the Indian point of view, tinged as it always is with other-worldism, it is not as clear as it is to Socialists at home that the ideal should be a small well-found family instead of the old Biblical ideal of a large, although perhaps impoverished, family. Indeed, children are still regarded as a blessing and in many spheres of agricultural and industrial activity are a refuge for the parents in old age. Incidentally, the Hindu law of inheritance with its continual fragmentation of agricultural holdings and the encouragement which it affords to the whole family to remain in the village, is almost as great an evil as the "Malthusian Devil".

3. The illiteracy of the masses is a standing item of the Congress indictment of British rule. The cost, however, of providing teachers even at a salary of Rs. 10 per mensem for a school-going population of, say, fifty millions on the basis of one teacher for fifty children would amount to something like twelve crores per annum. (This amounts roughly to the whole of the revenue at the disposal of, e.g., the Bengal Government and twice the revenue at the disposal of the Government of the Central Provinces and Berar.) Indian thought has concentrated largely on this subject and in the Central Provinces the Congress Ministry, under the inspiration of Wardha, initiated the so-called Vidya Mandir (Temple of learning) scheme under which every village was to have a simple form of instruction provided by a teacher who would be paid largely in kind. The scheme is even now being tried out; it has not proved very successful because of (*a*) the uncertainty of the income arising from lands which are intended to be set apart for the salary of the teacher and also because (*b*) little thought was given to the need for different courses of instruction, and consequently additional teachers, in the years subsequent to the first year's study.

Also (*c*) the scheme is not particularly popular with Caste Hindu elements which by heredity, natural aptitude, and background, are especially suited to a literary education which indeed gives them an immense advantage when it comes to competitive examinations for Government service, the profession[s], &c. Here again, the outlook of Caste Hindus who are largely represented in the Congress organisation and Hindu Legislatures, differs widely from the needs of the submerged millions. Hence the grossly top-heavy structure of Indian education with its disproportionate number of University students nearly all of whom come from the higher castes of Hindus; with whom the Muslims of Bengal or the Scheduled Castes throughout India, for instance, find it impossible to compete successfully in examinations. Gandhi has given his blessing to what is known as the Wardha syllabus of education which seeks to impart knowledge through the medium of industrial occupation, ordinarily a simple form of cotton spinning and weaving by hand. Two Government normal training institutions in the Central Provinces at Wardha and Seoni have been engaged almost wholly for some years in training teachers in this new syllabus. What may be regarded as an improvement on this syllabus in the practical sense is one which is now applied in some areas in the Central Provinces and is known by the name of the Director of Public Instruction as the D'Silva Syllabus.

It will be seen from the foregoing that the problem is not only complex but is far from being one which has been neglected. The fundamental fact, which is too often forgotten in regard to the Indian population, is that there is no such thing as "all men being born equal" i.e. intellectually equal. Indeed, the trouble is that the Scheduled Caste, backward communities and aboriginal tribes, although together numerically the largest element in Hindu Society, are not for many generations likely to be able to compete with Brahmins and other Caste Hindus in the sphere of intellectual attainment and will benefit little, if indeed they will not suffer, from the transfer of power from British hands to the hands of the intelligentsia. In Bengal, examinations for several of the Provincial Services are now conducted in different compartments for Hindus, Muslims, Scheduled Castes, and others, and the top men are selected according to the number of vacancies assigned to each class. The same problem of giving adequate and fair representation to classes not possessing the hereditary intellectual advantages of Brahmins and other high caste Hindus confronts most of the Provincial Governments and is one which Public Service Commission[s] have to face.

Again, Primary Education is handled in the main by local bodies—District Boards, Local Boards and Municipalities. These are generally uninterested in Primary Education *qua* education although in some Provinces they have shown the keenest interest in the educational structure as a political weapon. In the Central Provinces several District Councils used the great body of primary

school teachers as Congress agents and propagandists. Any great advance in primary education may very well require in some Provinces resumption from local bodies of their responsibility for primary education and may involve disputes with any Provincial Legislatures which are inclined to favour a development of higher education at the expense of primary education.

Another difficulty about universal primary education is that there is nothing whatsoever in many thousands of Indian villages to keep literacy alive—no advertisements, no shop signs, few, if any, literate homes and few who can spare time or money for newspapers, however cheap. Consequently, the danger of a lapse into illiteracy is very real. As to Compulsory Primary Education, and the attitude of Local bodies to this problem, and to Education generally, please see page 361, Indian Year Book 1942–43, which contains informative articles on all aspects of Education.

As regards the suggestion of "double shifts", I am informed that the expression is generally misinterpreted as meaning the same teachers teaching double shifts of pupils; but that actually it means double shifts of teachers and pupils, and that the expedient is only advantageous where buildings are a major problem and in thickly populated urban areas where pupils are numerous. Double shifts would not help much to solve the problem in India.

The position about adult education is that any money available is better spent on child education. The position about women teachers is that we have not as yet enough even for the exiguous number of girls' schools.

4. Among enactments which do not find mention in the several notes under review is one which permits of great progress in the sphere of village uplift if only advantage is taken of its provisions; it is the Bengal Village Self-Government Act. Under that Act, works of improvement such as schools, dispensaries, roads, bridges, and many other things, can be undertaken from the income of the Union Board concerned. I personally have several times visited one village in Khulna district, Barrackpore (not the Barrackpore near Calcutta), where really useful activities were undertaken owing to the energy of the President of the Union Board who was a humble clerk in a Government Office. It must be admitted that grants were freely made from various Government sources to supplement the meagre income available for these works of utility.

Again, the rural reconstruction programmes, including water-supply projects, of the Government of India initiated in the late twenties or early thirties, to which reference is made in the India Office Note,[3] did an immense amount of good all over India. Many hundreds of wells and dispensaries and many other works of utility have resulted. It is on the lines of subventions involving contributions from Provincial revenues, and local sources, that the Government of India can effectively intervene in all domains of social betterment.

Unfortunately, it looks as if, after the war, the finances of the Government of India will be in a parlous state while the Provinces will have large balances resulting from inflated receipts under such heads as Income-tax and Forests. It is doubtful whether the Provinces will be able to finance schemes involving large recurring expenditure. But they may be in a position to embark on schemes involving capital expenditure which can be financed from the balances which have accumulated as a result of war expenditure. In the past, I have felt that the financial policy of the Government of India was unduly conservative in view of the immensity of the need for social betterment in India especially when compared with the go-ahead policy of other parts of the British Commonwealth, e.g. Australian Colonies. I would say that, provided money is forthcoming, the Central and Provincial Governments are fully alive as to the directions in which it can and should be usefully spent. There is nothing in the record of the Government of India since its assumption by the Crown which suggests the contrary—cf. the wonderful progress made under Irrigation, Communications, Medical Relief, Higher Education, Local Self-Government, &c. In short, there is nothing radically new in the Cripps-Bevin Memorandum. Agricultural development has been exhaustively dealt with in the report of the Linlithgow Commission,[4] in the Central Provinces, for example, the work done by the Agricultural Department and the College of Agriculture is a source of satisfaction throughout the Province. To this influence must be ascribed in part the success which has attended the campaigns for a change over from short to long staple cotton and from cotton to food-stuffs in the last agriculture year (1942–43). The Central Provinces already possess 12 Demonstration farms, 6 Experimental farms, 10 Government demonstration plots and a fairly considerable number of private demonstration plots, the policy being to substitute the last named for Government demonstration plots wherever possible. If progress has been slow under Rural Public Health, Rural Medical Relief and Primary Education, it is because the numbers involved are so enormous while finance has been restricted by the heavy expenditure involved on what are now recognised as all too inadequate measures for Defence and by the secular and hereditary poverty of the masses. What is wanted is money rather than a new and more powerful stimulus. There is, however, unfortunately little room for expansion of Provincial revenues and the suggestion that any political party would sponsor schemes for raising more revenue from the peasant runs counter to the experience of Provincial Autonomy under which a dangerous tendency has manifested itself to forgo land revenue as a bribe to the electorate. Subventions from the Centre, if they are acceptable to the Provinces, must be guaranteed as recurring over a period of years.

[3] See Vol. III, No. 114, note 1.

[4] The Royal Commission on Agriculture in India (1926–8) chaired by Lord Linlithgow; for its final report see Cmd. 3132.

5. A factor which has not been mentioned in the objectives referred to in paragraph 10 of the Note of the two Ministers is a long-term improvement in the prices of agricultural produce. No factor can add more to the prosperity of the Indian people than one which secures for them remunerative prices for their produce. At the moment, we are witnessing chaotic changes which, perhaps for the second time only in history,—the first being in consequence of the war of 1914–18—have benefited the cultivator at the expense of the townsman. It may be that these inflated prices are purely ephemeral and they may even disappear early with the reoccupation of Burma and the advent of Burma rice and other produce into India. At the same time, it would be well to remember that just as the prosperity of England began with the continental demand for English wool, so the prosperity of India depends largely on the demands for its agricultural produce. The prosperity of the Bengal cultivator, for instance, during the 1914–18 war and subsequent period arose largely from the demand for jute at highly profitable prices.

6. As regards the town worker, the Congress is known to have the backing of, and to be in some aspects controlled by, great industrialists. With the passing of Gandhi, it is likely that power in the Congress Provinces will pass increasingly to this element whose natural tendency towards *laissez faire* is increased in India by the lack of a feeling of community between employers and employees, e.g. a Brahmin or Caste-Hindu owner is unlikely to feel sympathetic towards the social progress of employees who, more often than not, belong to Scheduled Castes or backward or aboriginal classes. Again, attempts at social legislation are often subject not only to genuine criticism but also to factious misrepresentation as designed to cripple and handicap Indian industry in the interests of British trade. In short, while the implementation of a policy of industrial development may present only *ad hoc* difficulties, a policy of industrial control is likely to arouse a different kind of opposition in Hindu Provinces where Big Business, largely in the hands of Gujaratis, Marwaris and Caste-Hindus, is influential. It follows again that the Provincial Legislatures must be reckoned with in the development of any such policies.

7. The above skeleton review of the background of a policy of social betterment and industrial development points to the conclusion that the Indian and Provincial Governments are quite capable of tackling their own problems and that hitherto the chief obstacle to social betterment has been finance and not lack of imagination or faith on the part of the Central or Provincial Governments. The problems involved are complex and not free from controversial aspects: it is doubtful whether there will be any strong disposition to believe that a new stimulus from above, or British experts, can help very much in their solution. It is not suggested that conditions in, e.g. Russia, should not be fully explored where there is any likelihood of the method of handling problems

in that country being useful in India. The successes alleged to have been achieved in Russia, Japan, Turkey, and even the British Colonies in Africa, have however been achieved by authoritarian or quasi-authoritarian régimes whereas the politician in India is afraid of his own shadow when it comes to the question of raising more money by taxation—cf. municipal administration throughout India. There could be much social progress if we were allowed to be totalitarian and authoritarian.

8. Again, it is quite certain that nothing big can be attempted while the war continues and as present indications are that it will continue longer in the Far East than in Europe, India is likely to remain directly involved in war activities, as an operational base, longer than Great Britain. The staffs of all services, whether Secretary of State's Services or Provincial Services, have been "milked" to depletion point. For instance, the whole executive staff in the Central Provinces from the Deputy Commissioner, through Assistant and Extra-Assistant Commissioners, Tahsildars, Revenue Inspectors and village Accountants, is at present engaged more or less—and more rather than less—on the food problem. The I.C.S. cadre has been absorbed by the Government of India to an extent which was never dreamt of in the calculation on which the strength of that service is based. The Provincial Governments have had to create many new appointments to tackle the serious problems which concern them. The effect of the vacancies thus created has been felt all down the executive line and the demand for executive officers of the Provincial Services has been on a par with the demand for officers of the I.C.S. The same is true of departments such as the P.W.D., the Medical Department, the Forest Department and indeed every Department which would be brought into the picture if a large-scale policy of social betterment were embarked on. Plant and equipment are unprocurable, e.g. the Defence Department have requisitioned so many steam rollers for aerodrome construction that the Provincial P.W.D. is unable to carry out its normal duties.

From this aspect, it would seem that any directions to the new Viceroy would be rather in the nature of a damp squib while faintly suggesting a return to the conditions of an era long since vanished. On the other hand, any such directions would almost certainly be misrepresented as indicating an intention to shelve the constitutional problem in favour of something which Indians can get for themselves.

The effect of all this is that no Viceroy could hope to launch successfully schemes for social betterment and industrial development while he has on his hands not only a great war but a constitutional problem of great complexity which the politically minded have no intention of leaving well alone while the war lasts.

It is not the intention of this review to deprecate a forward policy in the

spheres of social progress and industrial development. It is however suggested—in short and to sum up—that there are grave objections to the launching of such a policy with a fanfare by a new Viceroy at the present juncture because:—

(*a*) The constitutional issue is the only one in which politically minded Indians are interested and they will refuse to be put off with a progressive policy in any other sphere;
(*b*) a progressive policy as regards social betterment and industrial development is one which Indians will want to handle themselves. The power in different Legislatures rests with different strata of society and policy will need to be adjusted in accordance with the political centres of gravity in the Provincial Legislatures which are constitutionally chiefly concerned with the subject matter of social betterment;
(*c*) it is quite impossible to recruit and train men for public service of any kind in India in the short time which might suffice at home. Cadres are so depleted by the evolution of new responsibilities and duties connected with the war that the services would be quite inadequate to bear any considerable additional strain;
(*d*) new plant and equipment will be almost unprocurable for civil needs while the war lasts.

While, therefore, there is everything to be said in favour of the new Viceroy encouraging spade work and investigation in connection with social betterment, so far as circumstances and staff permit while the war continues, it seems that it would be (*i*) politically undesirable to announce any major activity in this sphere at this juncture, and (*ii*) impracticable to implement any such announcement, if it were made.

H. J. TWYNAM

61

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 106th Conclusions, Minute 2

L/PO/2/16: ff 4–5

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on 27 July 1943 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison

Also present during discussion of item 2 were: Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Sir Kingsley Wood, Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr Hugh Dalton, Lord Cherwell

INDIA

War Financial Settlement of 1940, and Indian Sterling Balances

(Previous Reference: W.M. (42) 129th Conclusions, Minute 2)[1]

2. Arising out of Minute 1,[2] discussion took place on the war financial settlement of 1940 with India, and Indian Sterling Balances.

It was pointed out in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's paper on Reciprocal Aid to the U.S.A. (W.P. (43) 331)[3] that by far the largest item in the aggregate overseas liabilities of the United Kingdom was the growing debt to India. We now had to meet the greater part of our expenditure in India by borrowing rupees from the Government of India, against the provision here of sterling. As a result, the sterling balances of the Government of India, including those of the Reserve Bank, would have risen from about £58 millions at the end of December, 1939, to £745 millions at the end of this year. This liability was still increasing rapidly.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he regarded this as the one black spot in our arrangements for the financing of the war. All the experience at the end of the last war showed that these large burdens of indebtedness between nations poisoned relations with countries, and led to an intolerable situation. It was impossible to transfer very large sums from one country to another, and any attempt on our part to make repayment on this scale must, in the last resort, result in putting an unbearable burden on the backs of British workpeople. He entered a plea that the broad equities which had led President Roosevelt to establish the principle of Lease-Lend should apply to the war effort of the United Nations as a whole.

The Prime Minister said that he thought that we ought to reserve the right to put in a counter-claim in respect of all that we had done to defend India from conquest by Japan. In any event, he was not prepared to take the responsibility of this situation continuing without Parliament being informed of our increasing liability.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that whatever the improvement in her prospective position, India had so far been impoverished, rather than enriched, as a result of the war. India had produced goods and services for the war effort, and had received in exchange, not goods, but a promise of payment at a later date. He offered no objection to Parliament being informed of the position. (THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER interposed that he had given some indications of the position in his last Budget Speech.)[4] The Secretary of State added, however, that the Indian view of the settlement of 1940 was that

[1] Vol. III, No. 24.

[2] The War Cabinet had been considering 'Lend-Lease Reciprocal Aid to the United States'. R/30/1/4: ff 134–6.

[3] Not printed.

[4] See *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 388, 12 April 1943, col. 941.

it had proved to be far more onerous on them than they had contemplated. Furthermore, we were not in a position to secure a more favourable agreement or to compel Indians to produce goods for the war effort, and if we were to state that we proposed to put in a counter-claim the only result would be that India would cease to manufacture the war supplies which we now drew from her. The whole problem should be deferred till the end of the war, at any rate so long as India's co-operation in men and supplies was essential to its prosecution.

The discussion which ensured [ensued] showed general support for the view that our growing indebtedness to India seemed to be developing on lines not unlike our indebtedness to the United States in the last war. This was a dangerous situation which called for careful examination by the War Cabinet. The view was also expressed that, with the progress of the war, the fundamentals of the position had changed. No one had ever contemplated a situation, in which we should be piling up a heavy indebtedness to India.

At the same time it was recognised that the position was very complex. Thus THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE felt that no decision should be reached on this matter until the whole position of which India's growing sterling balances was but one factor, had been examined comprehensively. Further, it would be undesirable that any public statement should be made on the matter until the War Cabinet had reached a decision as to the policy to be pursued.

There was also recognition of the undesirability of taking any action which might look like unilateral repudiation of a bargain, and which might lead to a reduction in the volume of goods and services which India was now contributing to the War.

The War Cabinet:—

(1) Invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer to submit a comprehensive Memorandum to the War Cabinet dealing with the war financial settlement of 1940, and the growth of India's sterling balances in relation to India's general financial and economic position, together with proposals for meeting the situation disclosed by our growing indebtedness to India.

(2) Invited the President of the Board of Trade, in connection with this inquiry, to prepare a Note as to the extent to which this country could export goods to India after the war, in repayment of our indebtedness.

62

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *27 July 1943*

I have no letter from you to answer, but there are one or two things that may be worth mentioning. I send you by this bag Gandhi's 150-page letter.[1] I cannot claim to have examined it with close attention!—the Home Department are going through it in detail—but I confess that it seems to me one of the most boring documents I have come across, and I am much inclined to share Colville's view that were it to be published it would do the old man very little good. But I propose to suspend any judgment as to how to handle it until my expert advisers here have been able to go through it more closely. The general impression left on me is that it is a somewhat niggling piece of detailed special pleading, and very much below the old man's usual form. But no doubt he feels that, as we have had a pretty extensive attack on him in our pamphlet about Congress responsibility, his only remedy is to endeavour to controvert what we say on specific points. As for his shorter letter, I have telegraphed[2] to you to take your mind as regards what answer should best be given if you find a Parliamentary question put down to you of such a nature that you cannot very well avoid an answer. I do not propose to make up my mind finally about showing or not showing the letter to Council until I know your view on this last matter.

2. Otherwise politically things are pretty quiet here. The non-party leaders have just had another meeting which has, however, fallen pretty flat. I send you a copy of the statement they issued[3]—there is nothing new in it, and nothing about which we need give ourselves great concern.

3. Jinnah was yesterday attacked, as you will have seen from the press telegram, by a Muslim who appears to have been a Khaksar, and slightly injured. I made enquiries about his condition at once and have sent him a telegram of sympathy. I am much relieved, first that the business was no worse, though for a man of Jinnah's age and somewhat frail physical condition, the nervous shock of an attempt of this character must be considerable; secondly, that the attack was not by a Hindu. He has issued a very sensible, short and dignified statement appealing for calm. But the business will not improve relations between the Khaksars and the Muslim League.

* * *

[1] See No. 51, note 1. [2] No. 58.

[3] Reported in the *Hindustan Times* of 25 July 1943 and calling on 'His Majesty's Government to bring some imagination into play and to undo the mischief born of a policy lacking in all the essentials of statesmanship'. L/P&J/8/512: f 119.

5. The Colvilles have just arrived to stay. I find him in excellent form; greatly interested in his work; and applying a very sound political judgment to his problems. They are both most grateful to you for the help you gave them in getting air passages for Lady Colville and their daughter. I am glad that Colville has been able to come up at this moment. From my own purely selfish point of view, it has been, I need not say, most interesting to get first-hand information about conditions at home and the Parliamentary stage. Apart from that it is very useful to be able to discuss the Gandhi issue personally with the Governor most immediately concerned. On the official side, it gives him a chance of meeting the various personalities in the Government of India and of discussing in greater detail problems of direct concern to Bombay such as food, accommodation for the armed forces, welfare and amenities for troops, and major general issues such as inflation and the like. He has also welcomed the opportunity of making personal contact with the Chief and of meeting the P.S.Os., &c. at General Headquarters. I hope to have a chance of meeting him in his own Province before I leave India; for I propose, all being well, to do a brief farewell tour to Madras, Poona and Bombay in the second half of next month, coupled with a brief visit to Cochin, to give the Maharaja his G.C.I.E., and a couple of days in Travancore. I have for the last three or four years regularly visited Madras and Bombay so as to keep in touch with the communities, both European and Indian, and with war effort, in those two very important centres; and though one's visits have perforce always had to be very short, and rarely more than a couple of nights, one has been able to crowd a great deal in the way of inspections, interviews, &c., into a short time, and I have no doubt as to the value of the contacts so made. And though travelling by air in the Monsoon is not particularly attractive, the air does save one an infinity of time, and enables one to cover in ten days what would have taken one the best part of three weeks travelling by train.

6. I continue to await with interest developments about the Supreme-Commander-in-Chief.

* * *

8. In paragraphs 11 and 12 of your letter of the 21st of June[4] you referred to a scheme promoted by non-official elements for a federation of the Deccan States. That idea does not seem to have made any further progress but a recent letter from the Resident in reply to an official letter of the 20th of May[5] on the future of the smaller Indian States which you have no doubt seen, says that the Rulers of the States concerned met in Poona recently to discuss the question of advance in co-operative measures of administration and reached the conclusion that there is no necessity for any change at present. The question of our attitude to this reply will be considered when Wylie takes over but in the meanwhile it is perhaps sufficient to say that as the Rulers have refused to make any

advance even towards such modest objectives as the maintenance of a joint High Court or a joint Police Expert, there is little hope of their accepting any advice regarding the more ambitious schemes which you mention in your letter.

* * *

12. I propose to deliver a farewell address to the combined Legislature on the 2nd August. My present intention is to make it pretty general in character, and very much "Good-bye". There is nothing I can tell them about future politics or future constitutional development that they do not know already; though I shall probably remind them of the extreme importance of their getting down to the work themselves, and of the fact that the finding of a solution is really essentially a matter for Indians, that is if they want a change, rather than for us. It is a temptation, too, to indicate to them that not one single practicable solution has so far been put up or attempted by the Indians, but that they have been very active in knocking down any attempts that we have made to find an answer. But anything that I do say will, I need not say, be phrased with every anxiety to avoid hurting their susceptibilities.

[4] No. 17. [5] Copies of this correspondence are on L/P&S/13/981.

63

Mr Amery to Sir Kingsley Wood

L/F/7/2861: f 31

INDIA OFFICE, *28 July 1943*

My dear Kingsley,

When driving to the station to catch a life or death train, you may well reflect whether your conscience or necessity will compel you to bilk your taxi man when you get there. But I should hardly think that you, with your customary prudence, would put your head through the window halfway and tell the cabby that you have no intention of paying when you get there as you mean to raise a counter-claim for all the indirect service you have rendered him in your capacity as a faithful steward of the Nation's finances.

It may be a good thing that the public should know the trend of our growing indebtedness to India. The Financial newspapers have in fact from time to time drawn attention to it and so have you in your Budget speech.[1] But to say anything that would suggest our going back upon our bargain with India, in other words, that we expect India to make a further contribution to the war effort without paying for it, would surely be folly. The only result would be the resignation of the Viceroy's Executive and the cessation of production by the Indian firms whose co-operation, whether on the profiteering basis or not, is

[1] See No. 61, note 4.

essential. What will become of the war effort if Tata's, and all the cotton and jute mills stopped working?

We have got to face the fact that India cannot be compelled to contribute to the war effort, any more than a Dominion can. Persistence in Winston's policy will lead us nowhere in the war and may well finally wreck any chance of keeping India in the Empire.

Meanwhile what is the use of crossing the bridge before we get to it? We have no notion how long the war will last or what form the Far Eastern part of it may take. Far sooner than come to an open breach with India I would be prepared, once Burma and Malaya are cleared, to say to the Americans that we cannot carry out our contract with India any further and that they must take it over if they wish for Indian supplies or Indian materials for the rest of the campaign.

Nor do we know what the real burden of the debt will be. The whole scale of these things has gone up enormously since the last war and money will have a different value, in that sense, after the war as well as during it. It may well be that £1,500 million may mean a far less burden than the American debt after the last war, especially as it is within the Sterling Area. This quite apart from the possibility, or indeed probability, that sterling may depreciate heavily in terms of goods and services after the war, in which case the burden of our obligation might be very greatly reduced. This may be an indirect form of bilking, but certainly not a deliberate one.

Again, I think we are apt greatly to exaggerate even the American debt after the last war. What made payment so difficult was that the Americans on their side were not prepared to take our goods and that we on our side, wedded to free trade were prepared to take annually four or five times as much as the Americans took from us. If we had been prepared to substitute for even 25% of our American imports, goods made here or in the Empire, we could have borne the burden of that debt without any really great difficulty.

That is all as it may be. The one thing that we cannot do is to paralyse India's war effort now.

Yours ever,
[L. S. AMERY]

64

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *28 July 1943*

I am afraid the question of the Indian sterling balances may revive again in an acute form even before you are able to hand over. The question came up in

Cabinet yesterday[1] and for two hours the Winstonian volcano, after a preliminary half-hour's eruption, rumbled and spluttered on the theme of the counter-claim he was going to make against India for her defence in the wider sense. Kingsley Wood has been instructed to prepare a fresh paper setting out the whole position and we may have to face another direct onslaught, possibly not so much in the shape of a message to the Government of India as in that of a statement in the House of Commons pointing out the gravity of our position and our intention to put in a counter-claim. The position is, of course, growing serious. It may well be that before the war is over we shall be owing India something like £1,500 million sterling. Obviously we shall not be in a position to pay that over the counter and some sort of funding scheme will become necessary, e.g., 1% or less. But all that is in the future. What is to my mind folly is, when driving to catch a train for life or death, to lean through the window and tell the taximan that you do not mean to pay the fare at the station because you have a moral counter-claim against him.

2. To my mind the whole future is so uncertain that it is impossible to say now either what the nominal total of the balances will be or what they will really amount to in relation to our economic position. We have no idea yet what the real value of sterling will be in terms of goods and services and depreciation may well halve the real debt we shall have to pay. Nor do I believe that even the maximum debt that we can incur will necessarily ruin us. On the contrary it may in our case, as in that of other countries, prove a stimulus to enterprise and inventiveness abroad coupled with simple living at home. Other countries before now have been in the same position and grown out of it. What it does mean no doubt is that such a position would call for a drastic revision of our whole happy-go-lucky free trade economic policy. After all we could have paid our American debt without difficulty after the last war if we had been prepared to reduce our surplus imports from America by 25% and substitute home or Empire goods for them.

Good!

L.

Even better!

L.

[Para. 3, on the project for an Empire commercial union; para. 4, on India's position in lease-lend arrangements; and para. 5, on Mr Shamaldhari Lall's future prospects, omitted.]

6. In paragraphs 11–14 of your letter of the 22nd/26th June[2] you referred at some length to the difficulties which you were having with the judiciary and suggested that it might become desirable to send out a High Court Judge

[1] See No. 61. [2] No. 18.

of long experience from this country to advise privately on the relations between the Executive and the Courts. I am very glad to see from your personal telegram No. 1496–S[3] of the 15th July that the Calcutta High Court has discharged the rule against the officers concerned in the contempt case and I hope that it will not be necessary to resort to the expedient of sending anyone out from here. You may like to see however a note[4] which Kemp, my Legal Adviser, recorded on the points raised in the paragraphs of your letter of the 22nd/26th June and I enclose a copy of it.

7. I wonder what the Indian reaction to Mussolini's downfall has been? It is still too soon to know exactly what happened, but apparently when Mussolini told the Fascists' Grand Council that the best Germany could do for them was to hold northern Italy, leaving Rome eventually in our hands they decided that the game was up and that they must hand over to the King and fade out of the picture. The official pretext is that this should improve Italy's unity for defence. It looks much more though as if the real object was to provide a Government that could negotiate with us. As to unity, I imagine that there are few cities or even villages in Italy today where there is not confusion, if not rioting and massacre, between the old Fascist bosses and the elements which have hitherto been suppressed. None of that can of course contribute to the effective conduct of the war. It might indeed conceivably lead to the Fascists rallying in self-defence in northern Italy and calling in the Germans to help them, though I think that an unlikely solution. More likely is that the Germans will wipe off Italy as an encumbrance and fall back behind the Alps after contesting Sicily and southern Italy as long as they can. That would certainly greatly relieve the strain on their railways and we should have to find coal and oil to keep Italy going. But it at once exposes, not only southern France and Austria to our air attacks, but turns the flank of the whole Balkan position which may anyhow become pretty untenable with the removal of Italian divisions now there. If the Western Balkans go then it may not be easy for the Germans to retain their hold on Bulgaria or to protect Rumanian oilfields from continuous air attack. The whole situation may indeed deteriorate very rapidly for them and, if it does, the moral effect on the German people may be very profound. In the last war what broke Germany's will was not the slow retreat of their troops through France and Belgium but the sudden collapse in September 1918 of both Turkey and Bulgaria, with the realisation that their flank was turned. The same may prove true this time. Still I had better not start making predictions for they may prove grievously wrong.

Golly!

L.

[3] L/P&J/8/633. [4] *Ibid.*

65

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *29 July 1943*

PERSONAL

No. 1601–S. Your personal telegram 26th July No. 16683.[1] I am most grateful for your help. I accept that it may be impossible to reach decision by 2nd August and will talk in general terms in my address to the Legislature.

2. I have carefully considered the position disclosed in paragraph 2 of your telegram with my Advisers. There are two points:—

(*a*) The most effective time;
(*b*) the minimum quantity.

3. As regards the first the short answer is "the sooner the better". But an equally important point is the time period over which deliveries should be spread in order to secure the maximum effect over the longest period. In the view of my Advisers we should attempt to secure an even flow of imports from the time of commencement up to the end of March.

4. As regards point (*b*); after discussion with my Advisers I would put the "desirable" minimum at 300,000 tons. If we could get that, while it would fall much short of our requirements we should still be able to say that we had withdrawn defence purchases from the market and that we shall meet all defence wheat requirements from imports which would still leave considerable quantities of imported wheat available for the population. The propaganda value of this would be very great indeed. I hope this makes the position clear.

[1] No. 59.

66

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 345

L/E/8/3322: ff 261–2

INDIA'S REQUIREMENTS OF IMPORTED FOOD GRAINS
REPORT BY THE SHIPPING COMMITTEE

WAR CABINET OFFICES, *30 July 1943*

1. The Shipping Committee have had under review a request[1] made by the Government of India, with personal support from the Viceroy and

[1] No. 38.

Commander-in-Chief,[2] for 500,000 tons of wheat to be imported from September to February inclusive.

The representations made in support of this request, and the probable effects of granting the request, are summarised below. The Committee submit, for decision by the War Cabinet, the question of how much shipping, if any, should be allocated to meet this demand.

2. The particulars furnished by the Government of India in support of their request are, briefly, as follows:—

Their latest investigation into the grains position as a whole shows that there is likely to be a deficit for the fiscal year 1943–44 of the order of 1·35 million tons between the estimated surpluses likely to be secured through Government procurement and the estimated needs of Provinces, Indian States and the Defence Services. This deficit in itself is only a small proportion of the total production, which amounts to some 50 million tons, but many millions of small producers are largely self-suppliers, and the quantity which is marketed is appreciably less than half the total production; there are already signs that difficulty is likely to arise in the non-rural and industrial districts, and in keeping the Armed Forces supplied, unless steps can be taken to ensure an adequate flow of food grains from cultivators.

At present the cultivators are continuing to hold stocks in the anticipation of an increase in prices (based partly on the conviction that there is an enormous drain on India's resources for the defence services), and (in parts of the Eastern area) in fear of Japanese invasion. To some extent also, they are influenced by the fact that, owing to high prices for the produce which they do sell and the lack of purchasable goods, they lack incentive to sell more than enough to cover their fixed charges; further, a not unnatural sense of insecurity creates a tendency to play for safety in estimating how much to retain for their own requirements. Attempts are being made to make dealers and other large holders dishoard, but the Government of India say that such attempts do not touch the root of the problem—that is, the question of securing the release of the holdings of millions of small cultivators—and they are convinced that the only solution is to arrange for substantial imports of grains, and for a public announcement to be made that enough wheat will be imported into India to satisfy all reasonable requirements of the population. It is argued that such a step alone is likely (i) to effect reduction in prices, and (ii) thereby to draw out accumulated stores of food grains by encouraging holders to dispose of these stores at once, instead of keeping them in the hope of further appreciation in market prices.

The Government of India state that the results of food shortage on the scale anticipated would include the following:—

(*a*) Internal disorder and strain, involving an adverse effect on morale, and also involving a call on the Defence Services for assistance.

(*b*) Further increases in the price of food grains, which would react on other prices and would help towards inflation.
(*c*) The danger that workers will leave the towns.
(*d*) The harmful effect on munitions production, caused by the necessity, for example, of operators having to spend lengthy periods in food queues.

The Commander-in-Chief has given a formal intimation to the Viceroy that, in view of the risks of civil disobedience and the effect of food shortage upon the movement of labour, his considered opinion is that India's military effort over the next two years will be in serious danger unless the food problem is solved.[3]

It may be that if full publicity were given to the provision of shipping for grain imports of a substantial amount, it would be possible to break the market without actually importing large quantities of grains. A similar device was tried some months ago, however, and it will not be easy to bluff the cultivators on this occasion. The Government of India urge that the full amount of 500,000 tons should be programmed, on the understanding that the programme will be discontinued if the earlier imports achieve their purpose.

It is anticipated that the import of grains will not be a continuing commitment.

The India Office state that it should be realised that famine conditions are already reported as having begun to appear in some parts of India, namely, certain areas of Travancore, Cochin and Bengal. This being so, it must be apprehended that if the undertaking now asked for is not given, shipments, perhaps in larger quantities, may later become unavoidable, whatever the consequences may be elsewhere, and meanwhile the structure upon which eastern operations from India must be based will have been irreparably damaged.

3. The view was expressed by members of the Shipping Committee that the real problem in India was one of inflation, of which food hoarding and the consequent shortage were symptomatic. They were informed that plans were afoot to import gold and silver into India[4] as a way of providing an alternative to the hoarding of grains, but the view of the Government of India was that it would be some time before the import of precious metals could produce a favourable effect upon the food situation. It was suggested by members of the Committee that, if the present difficulties were staved off now by an importation of food, they would simply reappear at a later date unless the fundamental problems were tackled, and it was pointed out that the import of bullion was only one of a number of measures for coping with inflation.

In this connexion, the India Office state that it is known that the Government of India are already coping strenuously with inflation, though full particulars

[2] No. 39. [3] See No. 39, para. 3.
[4] See Vol. III, Nos. 736 and 765 and No. 32 in this volume.

are not yet available. Information has already been received to the effect that the measures which have been put into operation include credit restriction, advance collection of E.P.T. on the basis of summary provisional assessments, drastic overhaul of defence expenditure, efforts to make larger supplies of consumer goods available, and intensified savings propaganda. The effect of these measures cannot yet be ascertained. Should these and any other possible measures have the desired effect, the necessity for wheat imports might be proportionately reduced.

4. The Shipping Committee have considered in some detail what the likely repercussions would be if the Indian request were granted in part or in full. Particulars are given in the Annex to this paper of certain additional demands which have been received, subsequent to the examination of world allied requirements by the Washington Conference, for food-stuffs and fertiliser requirements in the Eastern Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Area for loading during the period August to December 1943. Urgent requests are also to be expected in the near future from Australia, New Zealand and probably South Africa for increased supplies of phosphates; these requests are likely to involve an additional demand on shipping from the Red Sea, North Africa or Florida, although shipping so employed might be utilised on the return journey from the Southern Dominions to carry wheat for India. The Committee must also emphasise that there may well be other competing demands for tonnage which have not yet been formulated.

The demands from loading areas other than Australia could, if accepted, be satisfied without undue strain, with the present disposition of tonnage. The demands from Australia, however, amount to some 117,000 tons a month—that is some 80,000 tons a month to India for six months, 10,000 tons a month to the Middle East, and 27,000 tons a month towards the requirements of Ceylon (where it will be increasingly important to maintain supplies in order to procure the maximum output of natural rubber). The Ministry of War Transport advise that, without a serious dislocation of our plans, it would not be possible to arrange additional British-controlled tonnage to lift an average of more than 30,000 tons a month from Australia, as against these total requirements of some 117,000 tons a month.

According to information supplied by the Ministry of Food, it appears that part of the difficulty might be met by shipping to India 100,000 tons of barley which is likely to become available in Iraq. The India Office anticipate that barley would be acceptable to the Government of India, but are making enquiries by telegraph on this point.

5. In considering possible means of bridging the remainder of the gap, attention was drawn to the following points—

(*a*) There is a possibility that the cargo available in North America during

the remainder of this year may not be sufficient to load economically all the ships which under present dispositions would become available for loading in this area, and it may be thought reasonable, if sufficient importance and urgency are attached to the Indian demand, to forgo, in order to meet the demand, some of the tonnage which would ordinarily become available for loading in North America.

(*b*) It is not possible to form any reliable estimate of the effect which fulfilment of the Indian demand would have on the United Kingdom import programme for 1943, but unless there were a large increase in military requirements becoming effective in 1943, it could hardly do more than involve some degree of interference with the re-establishment of stocks in the United Kingdom contemplated by the War Cabinet when they directed an import programme of 26 million tons for 1943. Alternatively, and more probably, the arrangements for meeting the Indian requirement would compete with operational demands which have yet to be formulated.

(*c*) Any interference with the loadings from Australasia for the United Kingdom import programme as at present arranged for the later months of 1943 would cause serious difficulty. Stocks of crossbred wool are being heavily drawn upon, and in the case of zinc concentrates it is necessary to lift supplies regularly, as they become available.

Conclusions.

6. Whether the Indian demand should be met, in whole or in part, is a question clearly beyond the competence of the Shipping Committee to decide. Discussion at the Committee has shown that there is a wide divergence of opinion as to the part which the import of cereals should or could play in solving the Indian economic problem.

If the decision of the War Cabinet is that part or whole of the demand should be met, shipping could be found without undue strain to the extent that—

(*a*) out of the maximum of 30,000 tons a month which could be lifted from Australia, some margin might be available for India, after meeting whatever requirements for Ceylon and the Middle East might be judged to be necessary; and

(*b*) barley from Iraq, up to some 100,000 tons, might be shipped against this demand.

On the best estimate that can be made, however, less than one-third of the Indian demand could be met in these ways. Consideration of the means of providing the remaining amount would necessitate a comprehensive review of requirements and tonnage prospects extending far into 1944. It would be misleading to hinge such a review on a single claim for tonnage, but the main

relevant considerations, so far as immediate shipping questions are involved, are summarised in paragraph 5.

Signed on behalf of the Committee,

HARCOURT JOHNSTONE
Chairman

Annex to No. 66

The Washington Conference examined world Allied requirements and tonnage against them for the remainder of 1943, and set out in detail the amount of tonnage required from United Kingdom and North America each month to the Eastern Mediterranean and Indian Ocean Area. Since this review was made, a number of additional demands for tonnage have been made, principally for foodstuffs and fertilisers.

A summary of the principal additional demands is set out below:—

Consuming Area.	Requirement.	Period for Loading.	Average Monthly Requirement.	Possible Source of Supply.
	Tons d.w.		Tons d.w.	
India	500,000 Wheat	Sept.–Feb.	80,000	Australia.
Middle East	150,000 Cereals	Aug.–Dec.	30,000	North America, Australia or Persian Gulf.‡
	22,500 Sugar	Aug.–Dec.	5,000	Mauritius.
	38,000* Other Foodstuffs	Aug.–Dec.	7,500	North America or South America.
	40,000* Nitrates	Aug.–Dec.	8,000	North America or Chile.
Ceylon	140,000 Cereals	Aug.–Dec.	27,000	Australia.
South Africa	120,000† Foodstuffs, Chemicals and Timber	Aug.–Dec.	24,000	South America.
	50,000† Timber	Aug.–Dec.	10,000	West Africa.

* Allowance was made in Washington for certain quantities of these commodities to be lifted in the number of sailings scheduled each month from North America and Chile. Only the additional demands not so covered are included in this summary.

† These requirements have not yet been completely examined, particularly as regards the timber and chemicals.

‡ It is understood that 20,000 tons of this requirement will be taken in the form of barley from Iraq.

67

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 349

R/30/1/4: ff 130–1

India's Requirements of Imported Food Grains

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *31 July 1943*

The Indian economy is being strained almost to breaking point by the enormous demands laid upon it in its dual rôle as a source of supplies and of men for the Army, and a base for military operations. The large sums of money which have had to be poured into the country, against which there has been no offsetting volume of imports, have created a serious inflationary situation, one of the manifestations of which is a tendency to hold commodities on the part of the millions of producers scattered all over the vast countryside. India is essentially a primitive country with only a veneer of developed finance and industry, and the administrative system, although adequate for normal requirements, is a mere skeleton. Controls of the kind which are appropriate and feasible in western countries cannot be wholly successfully reproduced there. Nevertheless, the Government of India, who are now fully alive to the dangers of the position, are tackling the problem energetically. They have already put into effect financial and fiscal measures, to some of which reference is made in paragraph 3 of the Shipping Committee's Report, and further measures are urgently under consideration.

2. Meanwhile, with reference particularly to the food position, other factors complicate the issue. There is a general sense of insecurity abroad, enhanced by memories of the civil disturbances of last year and, in the north-eastern areas in particular, by the near presence of Japanese forces. The cultivator also finds that, owing to the good prices which he can get for such produce as he markets, coupled with the extreme shortage of goods (particularly cotton piece-goods) upon which to spend his cash, there is no strong inducement to part with a considerable portion of his cereals, and he either stores them or, probably to a quite considerable extent, consumes them. Meanwhile, in order to tackle the problem of drawing out these surpluses, it is inevitable that the provincial Government machine should be employed, and here a conflict of loyalties has in the past been apparent, since the immediate interest of these Governments and of their local officers is to look after the well-being of their own people and to avoid taking measures which might prejudice law and order. To make matters worse, there has been evidence of a campaign conducted by elements hostile to the Government, designed to persuade the cultivator not to part with his produce. The Government of India are confident that under the

arrangements to which they have now come with the provinces, these difficulties will be very considerably reduced.

3. It remains the case, however, that in the immediate future, before all the measures referred to above become effective, a very critical situation will prevail, and, in my view, it is essential to tide over this period by giving the Government of India the assistance which they have requested, by way of supplies of food grains definitely assured to them and publicly announced. I regard this as essential in order that the retention of undue stocks may be discouraged; that the price and supply control which the Government of India hope to establish may be facilitated; that the sense of security of those who are now apprehensive about the position may, in so far as it has been undermined by apprehensions of food shortage, be restored; and in particular that the widespread rumours as to the effects of the large requirements of the growing armed forces in India may be countered.

4. Unless the requirements of the Government of India are substantially met, I apprehend that there is grave danger of the following consequences in the coming months:—

(*a*) A marked reduction in the production of munitions and supplies in India is inevitable, with consequent detriment to the maintenance of the forces in, and drawing their supplies from, India. Moreover, the internal transportation system of India is already in a critical state owing to inadequate supplies of rolling stock and further deterioration will follow if the railway personnel go short of food. It is of vital importance that railway, port and inland water transport operatives shall be maintained in good heart and good health since the military situation in India is entirely dependent on the communications system.

(*b*) It is certain that India would find it necessary to refuse all exports of food-stuffs (thus creating difficulty in regard to Ceylon and the Persian Gulf) and might even be driven to cut off supplies of piece-goods which are so essential for the Colonies and other countries to which such exports are now sent.

(*c*) Famine conditions, which have indeed already begun to appear, may well spread to such considerable areas that we shall be driven before long to lay on shipping urgently and inconveniently, in order to prevent sheer starvation.

(*d*) Civil disturbances must be expected to break out and it might well be necessary to divert troops to deal with the situation, thus preventing their discharging their proper functions against the Japanese.

(*e*) Subversive activities among the troops in the Indian Army, which are already causing anxiety, are most likely to be successful if accompanied by reports from home that their families are starving.

5. In the light of the foregoing, I feel bound to advise my colleagues that there is, in my judgment, a most serious risk that, if we do not assist the Government of India in the way they have requested, plans for future operations based on the Indian theatre will be jeopardised, and the whole concept of India, not only as a source of supplies but also as a base for operations, may have to be reconsidered.

L. S. A.

68

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *2 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Thank you very much for your letter of the 9th July.[1] I wholly agree as to the importance of this inflationary business, and I think you can feel satisfied that we are doing our best. I had an opportunity of dealing with it in some detail in my speech[2] to the two Houses today, of which I send you a copy separately, and as you will see, I took the opportunity to be as definite as possible about inflation. On a different issue, I thought it well to direct the minds of people in this country to the effect on India's position in the post-war period of becoming a creditor country. For I do not believe that they have even begun to get down to the implications of that position, and when they do get down to them and realise what is involved the shock may not be a very pleasant one.

2. I am sorry that the silver position is not more wholly encouraging than you describe in paragraph 2 of your letter. But I am sure that Kisch will do his very best for us. As for Strakosch's other suggestions, which you mention in paragraph 3 of your letter, I note that I may be hearing further from you about them.

[Para. 3, on the Secretary of State's Advisers; and para. 4, on Mr Amery's talk to the 'American Outpost' in London, omitted.]

5. Mudaliar has now arrived here. I have not seen him yet, but am asking him to come and stay in the House for a couple of days, which will give me an opportunity of rather more informal and easy discussion with him than might otherwise be the case. You will be amused by the cutting from the

[1] No. 32.

[2] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. III, 1943, 2 August 1943, pp. 255–66. A copy is on L/P&J/8/512.

Tribune[3] of which I send you a copy, and the statements in which have had pretty wide publicity! I think Laithwaite is sending a copy to Jenkins.

6. I have also been greatly interested in the note[4] which Jenkins has been good enough to send Laithwaite of the talks in the constitutional field between yourself, Wavell and Mudaliar before the latter's departure from London; and it has been very definitely useful to me to know how his mind is moving. I need not say that I welcomed the caution displayed by the Field Marshal and yourself as to planning for constitutional reform. I wholly agree with what you said about the importance of leaving the constructive lead to private individuals. We shall no doubt, when the time comes, have to give some assistance to the politicians, if they really get beyond a certain point. What, had I still been here, I should be most anxious to avoid would have been a position in which no ideas whatever are forthcoming from the politicians, it being left to the Reforms Commissioner and the Viceroy of the day to put up the constructive ideas. The fact is that the first essential in this business, if there is to be any hope of progress at all, is agreement between the major parties and communities in relation to the division of responsibility and of the spoils at the Centre. If that agreement can once be reached, the other details will all fall into place. If it is not reached, then it is largely a waste of time endeavouring to elaborate alternative schemes or arguing about minor details. I am bound to say that I am growing extremely sceptical myself as to the prospect of any solution being reached here. But I was at pains, as you will see from my speech to the Legislature, to put it very fair and square to that body (which took it very well) that the solution of this matter was now in India's hands, and that *if India wanted a change* it was up to her to clear the ground for it. I quite deliberately used the words "if India wants a change", for the indications are to my mind growing that apart from the small coterie of ambitious politicians who would like to have the running of this country behind the protection of our bayonets, or the big industrialists who would equally like to manage it commercially in similar circumstances, there is precious little interest in any radical change in the system of government, and a fairly considerable and growing reluctance to face the chaos and misery that a termination or substantial contraction of the British connection would, in the absence of internal agreement, bring with it. It may be early days yet for Parliament to begin facing up to that position; but I shall be surprised if it is not one that we shall have to face up to in the next year or two. I should myself in those circumstances be all the more anxious to leave the burden, so far as we possibly can, of framing alternative proposals to Indians themselves, and I see no reason why we should overdo the secretariat assistance side, if secretariat assistance is to mean the provision of ideas. (The India Office will be able to tell you in that connection about the quite infructuous discussions that took place here in the Consultative

Committee in 1932.[5] That body according to my information sat for some months at considerable expense, but originated nothing, and confined itself to criticism of proposals for which it had asked the Department). I should incidentally be wholly opposed, had I anything to do with it, to using the Federal Court in any way, or any member of it, in connection with discussion of this matter, and I shall make that clear to Mudaliar. I should be greatly surprised, too, if Spens or the Court were likely to welcome it, and I can imagine nothing more likely to compromise its position in this country, where Zafrulla at any rate is already under some political suspicion. I am myself in full agreement also with Wavell's criticism of Mudaliar's idea for a general invitation; and frankly I would myself prefer to tell the politicians that they must get together themselves. All the more so as there will almost certainly be a row straightaway about the communal and party composition of any panel which Government may propose; and, suppose we were for instance to invite Jinnah or his nominee to serve on the panel and he refused to do so, its value would be largely reduced straightaway.

7. As regards changes in the Executive Council: I can quite definitely say that there is at any rate an element in the Executive Council which is strongly in favour of the retention of Home and Finance in European hands. My own considered judgment on that matter you know, and I have already suggested to you, for your consideration and Wavell's, the desirability of reappointing Raisman and of succeeding Maxwell by Twynam.[6] The more I think of that latter proposition the more important I feel it to be, though the decision of course will not rest with me. On the main issue of any further Indianisation, I certainly propose to make my view very clear to Winston when I get home, and I can do so with the authority of very considerable experience. Incidentally, since I last mentioned Twynam to you, I have told Maxwell in confidence that this idea had entered my mind. He welcomed it most warmly, adding that he could think of nothing that would be of greater reassurance to the stable elements in this country than that particular selection. I am very glad indeed that you took the line you did with Mudaliar in the matter.

[3] Of 28 July 1943 stating: 'It is now almost settled that Sir Ramaswamy will during Viscount Wavell's Viceroyalty be invested with status and powers corresponding to those of a Deputy Viceroy'. MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

[4] No. 34.

[5] On 1 December 1931, at the close of the second Round Table Conference, Mr Ramsay MacDonald announced the establishment of a small Consultative Committee which would meet in India under the chairmanship, in his own absence, of the Governor-General. The object of this Consultative Committee was to enable the British Government to maintain contact with representatives of Indian opinion and also to fill in gaps in the constitution as sketched at the Round Table Conference, whether these gaps were due to differences of opinion or to lack of time. The Consultative Committee met thirteen times in the first three months of 1932. A copy of its proceedings is on L/P&J/9/81.

[6] See No. 53, para. 12.

8. I do not think I need comment in any great detail on the government of the Section 93 Provinces by Executive Councils. You and I have examined the arguments in that connection more than once, and the position has not changed in any way. I see no sign of any popular feeling in the Section 93 Provinces, except again on the part of a tiny political minority, against the existing arrangement. The Muslim League (unless they got a disproportionate share of the spoils) would be very likely to jib at Executive Councils, and Congress on their present programme would, of course, be eliminated altogether and that in Provinces in which in the present Legislatures they are in a majority. And there is all the business of the necessity (unless one is going to hand over the government of the Provinces to an Executive Council free from *any* Legislature) of ensuring that the government which it represents has a Legislature functioning with it. But I need not elaborate arguments with which you are so familiar.

9. I do not myself attach much importance to the matter of Bajpai's status, and agree entirely with your comment. I would only say that the change suggested by Mudaliar would constitute a disharmony so long as India remains subordinate to His Majesty's Government in foreign policy.

10. As you know, I am quite open-minded on the matter of exchanging High Commissioners between India and Canada. The difficulty, so far as my recollection goes, is that it is the Canadians who, while sympathetic in principle, have not been very anxious to play in practice!

11. I hope you will not hesitate to let Wavell see my comments. I imagine that in fact you would probably wish in the normal way now to let him see the bulk if not all of my normal weekly letters.

12. I am glad to say that as I write there seems no particular prospect of the Mahatma staging a fast for the 9th, though anything is possible between now and that date. I am so glad that you gave the very definite reply[7] that you did to Sorensen's supplementaries. I told my Council of the receipt of Gandhi's short letter,[8] and read out its text to them. I added that the old man was a pretty frequent correspondent with the Home Department; that I would not normally think it necessary to trouble them with the details of such correspondence save where some point of importance arose, as in the present instance. I begged them to keep its existence and the terms of the letter entirely secret (I gather this has not deterred Sultan Ahmed, if my information is correct, from passing it to, at any rate, one press correspondent!) and they readily agreed to do so. They took the letter very well, and displayed some amusement at Gandhi's tactics. There was no suggestion from any quarter (and the whole Council were present except Jogendra Singh) that anything was called for

except an acknowledgment. I did not mention to them the 120-page letter[9] which is still being scrutinised here. To revert to the business of a fast: you will by now have had the replies[10] of all Governors to my circular letter of the 15th July,[11] and as you will have seen there is unanimity, for practical purposes, first, that if he does fast he must be allowed to take the consequences (though Clow raises the possibility of our setting him free for the purpose of the fast in the manner that was successfully adopted last February); and secondly, that while there might be some slight tightening up of publicity arrangements as compared with those of last February, those arrangements are probably, very broadly speaking, as good as we are likely wisely to be able to adopt.

[Paras. 13 and 14, on Indian government appointments; and para. 15, on Sir S. Runganadhan's emoluments, omitted.]

16. Since I sent you at the end of March a copy of my letter to Clow of March 25th[12] about the "victimization" of the services, Iddon's letter No. S&G 1755/42[13] of the 6th January has been received and examined. This letter enclosed a revised draft of an amendment to the Constitution Act, adding a new section after Section 93 on the lines of Section 270. This calls for no comments from this end; and I think you will agree with me that this is as far as we can profitably take the matter now. Whatever changes may occur in the Section 93 Provinces during the war, a resumption of office by Congress Ministries of the 1937–39 type does not seem likely to be one of them. After the war, the question to be settled will be the broader, and different, one of the position of the present members of the Services, at the Centre and in all the Provinces, under the post-war constitution. When that time comes, the ideas ventilated in this discussion should prove of use. Meanwhile the safety of the Services can be regarded as assured by the nature of the Governments now in existence, reinforced by such statutory protection as has been given by Section 17 of the Defence of India Act[14] and the Bihar and United Provinces Indemnity Acts.[15] You will have noticed that Rutherford in paragraph 4 of his letter of May 10th[16] mentioned a suggestion made by some of his Indian officers that the right to retire on proportionate pension should be extended now to Indians who have been recruited to the I.C.S. and I.P. after 1924. The arguments which my Home Department stated against that proposal when it was under discussion in

[7] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 391, 29 July 1943, cols. 1757–8. [8] See No. 51.
[9] See No. 51, note 1. [10] MSS. EUR. F. 125/111. [11] No. 43.
[12] Vol. III, No. 614. [13] L/S&G/File 132 of 1940.
[14] Section 17 of the *Defence of India Act* (Act XXXV of 1939) prohibited legal proceedings against 'any person for anything which is in good faith done or intended to be done in pursuance of this Act or any rules made thereunder'.
[15] Passed early in 1943 to indemnify crown servants in these Provinces for acts done to maintain or restore order.
[16] MSS. EUR. F. 125/50.

1935—see the H.D. telegram No. 1795 of July 21st, 1935[17]—do not settle the matter in its present aspect; but you will observe that Rutherford does not press it, and after consideration I do not myself feel that in respect of this class of officers there is any need to revise the views which I stated in my letter to Clow of March 25th in respect of the more comprehensive suggestion made by him.

3 August 1943

17. I have sent off today a telegram[18] about Basic English, in answer to your telegram No. 740 of July 13th,[19] and I now send by this bag a copy of Sargent's note[20] on the subject which gives all our rather scanty information and an expression of his views. Basic English does not seem to have caught on very effectively in India.

18. I have mentioned my address to the Legislature above, and send you the text of it by this bag. On the political side it contained what I was myself disposed to think fairly robust doctrine, but rather to my surprise it appeared to go down very well and there was much more applause than one is accustomed to in the Legislature. It seemed to me desirable to set out the position in some detail on this the last occasion on which I was to address the Legislature, and also to bring out not only the thankless and continuous efforts that we have all of us made to provide these people with something which would meet their differences and difficulties, but the lack of response there has been, and the fact that the solution is really one for India herself to devise. In commenting on the note which Jenkins was kind enough to send Laithwaite on the talks with Mudaliar, I have mentioned, in paragraph 6 above, my own feeling as regards arrangements for enquiries, &c. But I shall be very surprised if the people who matter here show much sign of getting round a table or trying to do the spadework.

19. I have just had a letter from Sarat Chandra Bose,[21] now in detention in Coonoor, and send a copy of it by this bag. It is a reasonable and well-argued letter which I must think over further, and I would not exclude the possibility that there may be a good deal of sincerity in it. But the difficulties of an interview with someone like Sarat Bose, given the delicacy of Bengal politics, and the general impression that might be caused throughout the country by such an interview, particularly when Subhas is behaving as he is, are clearly very great.

[Para. 20, on Mr H. Alexander's departure from India, omitted.]

Very sticky here—Best luck.

17 This telegram summarised provincial reactions to the proposal to grant the right of premature retirement on proportionate pension to Indian officers. It endorsed the views of the majority of Provinces that domicile was already the basis of differences in service conditions; that Indian officers serving their own country should be presumed to be able to appreciate probable changes in con-

ditions due to constitutional changes; that the danger of victimisation was exaggerated; and that the discretionary powers of the Secretary of State were adequate to meet individual cases of hardship. L/S&G/7/775.

[18] No. 1636–S. MSS. EUR. F. 125/25.

[19] Informing Lord Linlithgow of the establishment of a Cabinet Committee to consider the promotion of Basic English and asking for details of the extent to which it was taught in India. L/PO/10/17.

[20] Not printed. [21] No. 50.

69

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMPORTANT *3 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 1637–S. Burden which Aziz-ul-Haque is carrying at the moment, viz., Food, Industries and Civil Supplies and Commerce is so great as to be administratively unwise. He has done admirably over Food and also over cloth control. But he recognizes himself that he cannot really get hold of, or control three such heavy and active Departments at once. In the result I have decided to relieve him of Food, and to give it to Srivastava, who has accepted. Change, which has Aziz-ul-Haque's full support, will take place once long-term Food Policy Committee now sitting has presented its report, and present stage of Food planning is therefore concluded. This will probably be about middle of next month. Meanwhile nothing is being said publicly. But those concerned have all been informed here.[1]

[1] Mr Amery acknowledged this tel. in his tel. 833 of 7 August. L/PO/11/5b: f 6.

70

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *4 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 15th July[1] which has just arrived. I would like again to say how grateful we all of us are to you for the trouble you have taken with Sinclair about the air journey home for my family and myself. There has been a great deal of correspondence,[2] both by letter and by telegram, since your present letter was written, and I will say no more at this moment.

[1] No. 46. [2] See L/PO/8/8b.

2. I am very glad to read what you say in paragraph 2 of your letter about Gandhi's fast. For it is clear that your general view is in entire accord with my own and that of the Governors. We are examining at the moment various points in connection with publicity that have emerged from the replies[3] (the text of all of which you have had) from the Governors; and I will see that your point is considered with the others. But I very much doubt myself, in this country and given the degree of emotional excitement which would, in the minimum of time, be engendered by a fast by Gandhi, whether we could hope to be able to hold to a weekly bulletin or even to an interval of three days. We *might* be able to; it would be unwise wholly to exclude the possibility; but, in the light of previous experience here, I am bound to say that I am very sceptical, and I think that we should probably find that on the whole less inconvenience and less fuss and bother would be caused by putting up with a daily bulletin, and at the same time cutting down comment and severely censoring outgoing messages and incoming comment, than by a lag of the nature you suggest, attractive as that idea is. I feel great sympathy, on the other hand, for your suggestion that we should try to limit the space allowed for comment.

3. I was very glad to have your support over my letter[4] to Herbert and his troubles. I am not surprised that the Bengal picture produces the impression on you which you tell me that it does! and if you heard some of the local comment which reaches me from one source or another, your feelings would be stronger still. Much of the trouble of course is, beyond any question, due to Herbert's own personality. Our predecessors were right when they decided that for a Province like Bengal a man of real quality and experience, such as Anderson, was needed (Colville I should have thought, with his far greater Parliamentary experience and intelligence, would have handled it very well). It is quite true that at the time when these appointments were made it was very difficult to get a really good man out of the Whips. But I do hope that it may be remembered when the next vacancy occurs: for if Herbert does manage to stay the course without some disaster until the end of his normal term—and as you know I have very often had most serious doubts as to that—there will be a great deal of litter to be swept up thereafter, and a man of strong personality and much experience will be required.

4. But that is on the specific problem of Bengal; and paragraph 3 of your letter raises the wider issue of the Swiss system. I do not propose to trouble you with any elaborate comment on that in my present letter. But I would, on the two central points that you mention, say that I feel very doubtful indeed about ballot secrecy in this country, and quite certain that no oriental will accept defeat in a ballot as final: rather will he start at once to recover by intrigue, blackmail and corruption, that which he has lost in fair fight! And,

with as much experience of the quality of the type of individual who might figure in a ballot as I now have, I would feel very uneasy, were I a Governor, at the thought that I might be required to choose as Chief Minister whoever came out at the head of the poll, *plus*, as you say, the next 7 or 8 in order in the poll as his colleagues. But the point is an interesting one; and though Provincial Autonomy has done as well as it has, we can none of us overlook the risk that in certain circumstances it too might be wrecked by politicians out here. In that connection I thought it well recently to put certain doubts to Glancy as regards the new set up in the Punjab (Please see my letter of 16th July 1943,[5] copy sent by this bag; and Glancy's reply of the 20th July 1943[6] of which a copy was sent to you by the bag of 27th July). But I should not be surprised if the Punjab situation needed, as time went on, rather more attention than it was necessary to give it in Sikander's time.

[Para. 5, on changes in the India Office; and para. 6, on the filling of the emergency vacancy in the Governorship of Bombay, omitted.]

6 August 1943

7. I thought your answers[7] to Sorensen's supplementaries about Gandhi, &c. very adroit; they are certainly very helpful to us here, for they fill a gap which I very deliberately left in my speech in the interests of avoiding provocation, viz. the fact that so long as Gandhi and his friends continue to be detained for the reasons for which they have in fact been put in jail, we do not propose to talk business with them.

8. I mentioned in my letter of 2nd August[8] that I had had a letter[9] from Sarat Bose, and sent you a copy of it. I have now discussed with Maxwell and have checked up the information as a result of which Bose was detained. It is clear that much of this is based on sources which, I understand, we usually accept as entirely reliable and it shows that in the period before Japan came into the war he was taking a definite part in his brother's efforts, and was prepared to do a deal with the Japanese. I agree with Maxwell that in these circumstances his attempt to justify himself in his present letter cannot be regarded as sincere, and that it is more probably due to a desire to regain his freedom, and to get back to Bengal where he might, of course, be a danger in the event of any Japanese attack in that direction. It is evident from the 5th paragraph of his present letter that his attitude towards Japan fluctuates according to the likelihood of a successful invasion. It may be that Bose, seeing the way open, wishes to come out as a new leader in Indian politics. But there is no indication in his letter that he has any more constructive proposals than we have heard from

[3] MSS. EUR. F. 125/111. [4] No. 26. [5] No. 49. [6] No. 55.
[7] See No. 68, note 7. [8] No. 68. [9] No. 50.

such persons as the non-party leaders. In the circumstances, and after full discussion with Maxwell, I decided that it would not be wise for me to have any correspondence or dealings with him, and I have had a formal reply sent to him to the effect that so long as the grounds for his detention remain I do not propose to discuss matters with him.

9. Spens has been kind enough to let me see a copy of his letter to you of the 6th August[10] which goes by this bag, and in which he discusses the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court. I do not think that there is anything that I need say. There is obvious advantage in Wavell having the chance to talk the position over with you before he comes out. My own view is, I think, sufficiently clear from our earlier correspondence.[11] It is briefly that I have no objection in principle to the extension, and am very anxious to do anything that wisely can be done to enhance the prestige of the Federal Court. But I am bound, in a technical matter of this kind, to pay due deference to the views of those competent to advise, and, in present circumstances, to their feeling that the time is not yet ripe. I express no opinion myself as to when the proper time would be—it may be only a matter of a few months. But things may have begun to take shape a little by the time Wavell gets out here. In particular the Court will have had an opportunity of trying some cases under Spens' presidency, and if the result is impressive the establishment of the requisite degree of confidence in the Court and its personnel may be swifter than would otherwise be the case.

9 August 1943

10. Your letter of the 28th July[12] has just arrived. Many thanks for it. The point you raise in its opening paragraph about Indian sterling balances is obviously of very great importance and delicacy, and I am most grateful to you for giving me this early warning that we may hear more about it. I do not propose to comment at any length at this stage, but I will have a word with Raisman and let him know how the wind seems to be blowing.

11. I have been very glad to see Mudaliar. He is staying with me here for a few days, and I have also had a couple of good talks with him. I think that his time in London has done him a great deal of good. I always had a high opinion of his intelligence and his capacity for stating a case. But I am inclined to think, though it is too early yet to judge, that the effect of these different contacts and of his association with the Cabinet, &c. has been to broaden him. I dare say that he may think it wise in the political field, knowing as he does that nothing much can happen in these last few weeks of my time, to save his powder and shot for Wavell! Anyhow he has so far shown no sign of wishing to raise any political issues, and has not even touched on matters such as further Indianisation, &c. Incidentally, on that latter point, I am interested to see an increasing degree of criticism of the existing Indianisation of my Council on the ground that it

has no real popular value, and that if this is the best we can do it would have been much better to have left things alone. I do not take all that very seriously. I doubt if there is much real foundation for these rather peevish comments, and I am quite certain that the body I have been able to get together, even if in some ways it is not as strong as it might be, is thoroughly representative, and that its existence serves as a very useful safety-valve for certain feelings, and a definite reassurance to the moderate-minded and reasonable in this country. And as for the satisfaction with their representation in it of the minorities such as the Sikhs and Scheduled Castes, there can I think be no question.

[Para. 12, on the project for an Empire commercial union; and para. 13, on Mr Shamaldhari Lall's prospects, omitted.]

14. It is very kind of you to have sent me your Legal Adviser's note which you mention in paragraph 6 of your letter. I was interested to read it and am grateful to him for it (I think incidentally he has misunderstood me on one point in his paragraph 2.[13] My trouble is not that on the matter in issue the legal advice I receive is bad, but that I have *no* legal advice, as I think I explained in my earlier letter). I think things are easing rather, and I hope, once Spens gets into the saddle, and once he has been able to make contact with the various High Courts, &c., that that will help further to ease any existing tension. It is a great relief, as you say, to have got through these contempt cases safely. I was interested, incidentally, in the recent Privy Council judgment about a contempt case which came up from the Allahabad High Court.

15. You ask in the last paragraph of your letter what has been the Indian reaction to Mussolini's downfall. It has been one of very real and genuine satisfaction. Largely, I think, because Indian public opinion rightly judges the collapse of Mussolini and the abandonment of Fascism as a very clear indication of the approaching end of the war in Europe, and an outstanding tribute to our success in that campaign. But also because of the fairly deeply-rooted Indian aversion to Fascism as a political ideal (an aversion quite consistent with the adoption from time to time in politics of methods very little distinguishable from the best Fascist methods!). There is much satisfaction, too, at the part which Indian troops have played, both in the North African campaign which led up to the attack on Italy, and in these last few days apparently in Sicily itself.

[10] L/P&J/8/458. [11] Not printed. [12] No. 64.

[13] This para. commented on Lord Linlithgow's suggestion (in No. 18, para. 13) that H.M.G. might be invited to send out a High Court judge to investigate the Indian judicial system. It read: 'As to the other suggestion made by the Viceroy—which would appear to owe its origin to a lack of confidence in the legal advice at present available to him—there would of course be no sanction behind any course of action based on advice given by the "experienced High Court Judge" save that it would be founded on the highest legal opinion and experience. There is no guarantee that, as such, it would necessarily find favour with the High Court.' L/P&J/8/633.

10 August 1943

16. I am becoming seriously uneasy about the Bengal position, and I have telegraphed[14] to warn you of that. I am forming the strong impression that Herbert has no real control of what is going on, and that the administration is deteriorating very rapidly. I know that he has a very indifferent lot of Ministers, but either he does not keep in sufficiently close touch, through his official Secretaries, with what they are doing, or he is unable to keep them on the right lines. One fatal defect from which Herbert suffers in extreme degree is that he will insist on doing all the talking himself. I am told confidentially that his cabinet meetings consist very often of little more than an interminable and rather muddled homily by the Governor, which leaves the Ministers with their own words lying heavy on their chests, while the Governor fails to inform himself of the views of his Ministers. Bad administration is of particular importance in connection with food, which is such a delicate business at the present time. A report[15] which I have seen from Braund makes it clear that the local atmosphere is far from satisfactory in that regard. And he comments that there exists no adequate organisation at present to supply, or feed, or ration Calcutta, the second largest city in the Empire, even before alarm occurs, and still less afterwards; and that no provincial organisation exists to carry this out. Meanwhile the Ministers' idea of handling food has been to complain bitterly and try to get as much as they can out of the Centre. They are of course perfectly entitled to get what they can, but if there is to be any progress far more active assistance from Ministers themselves must be looked for. You should see, in this connection, the copy I send you by this bag of a letter[16] from Wood, my Food Secretary, to Suhrawardy, the Minister in charge of food, which speaks for itself. Over sugar distribution, again, there seems to be a thoroughly unsatisfactory situation in Calcutta. I have dealt with it in some detail in a letter which I sent yesterday[17] to Herbert, and a copy of which goes to you by the bag. As for the financial position in Bengal, I thought it well to ask Raisman, who has expressed himself in terms of great concern at the way things are moving, for a note of his views in case I should have to telegraph to you. I enclose in this letter copy of the note[18] he has let me have. It speaks for itself. I may of course have to include it or the gist of it in a telegram, but would like you to see it *in extenso*.

17. Part of the trouble is, no doubt, that the I.C.S. in Bengal, though much better than in the adjoining province of Bihar, is not of the highest quality. The crucial fact is I suspect that for this most important and difficult province one needs a Governor of very different calibre from Herbert. I do not think I can be accused of having treated him with any lack of care or consideration—as our correspondence over recent years will show, he has on two or three occasions been the subject of most serious concern to me, and I have had to

consider whether a change would not be in the general interest. I have continued, partly from perhaps an undue desire not to be hard on Herbert, partly in the sincere hope that there might be an improvement, to carry on and advise you that we were justified in doing so. But I am bound to say that as matters stand now I very gravely doubt whether a change is not called for, and I shall probably telegraph to you on this subject, once I have made up my mind, before you get this letter.

18. If there is to be a change I feel that it would be fairer to Wavell that I should carry the burden of it, than that he should have to face up to any insufficiency on Herbert's part shortly after taking over himself as Viceroy. And it is arguable, that if there is to be a change, to make it without delay so that the new man can have found his feet before the next year's campaign begins to develop. Lady Mary's illness would probably provide us with cover of the type that would readily be accepted by the public, and that might indeed result in Herbert handing over with some public sympathy. I need not say how unpleasant a business it is to have to consider this sort of change; and you and I have been singularly unfortunate in that, if Herbert does go, we shall have had to consider it twice within a few months. But the interests at stake, particularly given the war position, are too important for personal considerations to weight the scale, though if I do decide to recommend that Herbert be relieved, and you accept my recommendation, we should, I am sure, both of us be most anxious to make things as smooth for him over his handing over as possible. It might be necessary to consider an acting Governor for a short time, if, as I imagine is not unlikely, you were to have difficulty in finding at short notice a suitable Parliamentary successor. But we need not consider that for the moment. All I would most earnestly beg you to ensure if there is a change is that we get a good man. Herbert has been too close a repetition of Stanley Jackson, and it is increasingly clear that we just cannot afford to take back-benchers of no particular quality for posts such as these, which require energy, decision and intelligence, and the capacity in addition to handle Ministers. And while that would be true in peace-time, it is most markedly the case with Bengal in the front line and a most important base for the forthcoming campaign against the Japanese. I am sure that we have been very lucky in getting Colville for Bombay, and that is very much the type of man that will, I should have thought, in almost all circumstances be needed for Bengal.

19. At the first Council meeting after Mudaliar's return I took up the question of Indian representation at the War Cabinet, having previously had

[14] 1693–S of 9 August. MSS. EUR. F. 125/25. [15] Not printed.
[16] Denying Mr. Suhrawardy's allegation that Bengal was about to be put to some measure of starvation 'at the instance of the Government of India'. MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.
[17] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43. [18] Not printed; but see No. 74.

a word on this subject with my colleagues individually. There was general agreement that it would be wiser, without of course making any public announcement, not for the moment to fill the vacancy, and to wait until business of such a character arose or seemed likely to arise at home as would justify our deputing a Member of Council to be present in connection with its disposal. I see no signs so far of any interest in the Press in the fact that neither a Princely nor a British Indian representative is in London; but I dare say that someone will raise the point sooner or later. I am pretty clear in my own mind that the procedure[19] to which we now have it in mind to work is the wisest. It gets us over the difficulties which we are otherwise likely to experience in persuading a Member of Council to stay away from this country for any lengthy period (and given the standing and the nature of the post, I think it would be well to continue to fill it from Council). And it has the further advantage that the permanent strength of one's Council is not increased by 1, as has hitherto been the case. For the normal way of dealing with vacancies not likely to exceed a few months in duration would be to appoint a temporary Member of Council to hold the portfolio concerned while its permanent incumbent was on special duty in London.

20. Food continues to be my chief preoccupation. Azizul Haque made a very good fighting speech in the Assembly yesterday which has had a satisfactory Press. I will send you one of the Press reports on it—it brings out very effectively the extent to which Bengal in particular have themselves to thank for certain of their troubles. I am telegraphing[20] to let you know that the handing over of Food by Haque to Srivastava is now to take place tomorrow. Azizul Haque has worked so hard on this portfolio, and handled a very difficult question so skilfully, that I am very sorry to see him go from it. But no man can handle the three portfolios for which he is at present responsible in their present state of great activity, and the combination of Food with either Commerce or Industries and Civil Supplies would be unsatisfactory since Industries and Civil Supplies and Commerce are so very closely linked with one another.

All the best.

[19] See Vol. III, Nos. 653, 666, 670, 673 and 681.
[20] Tel. 1698–S of 10 August. MSS. EUR. F. 125/25.

71

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions, Minute 1

L/F/7/687: ff 265–7; R/30/1/4: ff 127–9

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 4 August 1943 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison

Also present during discussion of item 1 were: Sir Kingsley Wood, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Leathers, Lord Woolton, Lord Cherwell, Mr Harcourt Johnstone

SHIPPING

Indian Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 39th Conclusions)[1]

The War Cabinet had before them—

(i) A Report by the Shipping Committee on India's Requirements of Food Grains (W.P. (43) 345).[2]
(ii) A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (43) 349)[3] on the same subject.

The Shipping Committee, in their Report, stated that a request had been received from the Government of India for 500,000 tons of wheat to be imported from September 1943 to February 1944 inclusive. The Report summarised the particulars given by the Government of India in support of this request, together with an estimate of the results which they anticipated would follow a food shortage.

After analysing the means of meeting the shortage, the Committee pointed out that—

(i) Out of a maximum of 30,000 tons a month which could be lifted from Australia, some margin might be available for India after meeting whatever requirements for Ceylon and the Middle East might be judged necessary.
(ii) Barley from Iraq up to 100,000 tons might be shipped against the Indian demand. Less than one-third, however, of the Indian demand could be met in these ways.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that the Indian economy was being strained almost to breaking-point by the enormous demands made upon

[1] Not printed in Vol. III. [2] No. 66. [3] No. 67.

it, as a source of supplies and men for the Army, and as a base for military operations. In January last a serious shortage had shown itself, and a request had been made for food grains to be imported into India.[4] Later, however, the harvest had proved better than anticipated and it had been found possible to discontinue the import of grain. The Viceroy, however, had always warned him that a serious situation might arise.

One of the inherent difficulties of the position was, of course, the extreme difficulty of extracting surpluses from small producers. It was true that the 500,000 tons asked for was only 1% of India's total production. But considerably less than half the total production came into the market, and the deficit must be judged in relation to the areas and sections of the community in which the shortage had or would show itself.

There was no doubt that the present shortage of grain was connected with the inflationary position. Steps had now been taken to meet this,[5] but it was clear that no further anti-inflationary measures instituted at this date could have any effect in extracting grain from the producers to meet the immediate situation.

The Secretary of State for India urged the War Cabinet most strongly to treat this as a very serious situation which, unless it was met, would seriously impair India's war effort.

In the view of the War Cabinet, the shortage of grain in India was not the result of physical deficiency but of hoarding, due to inflationary conditions. There was general agreement that the situation could not be dealt with simply by the importation of grain and that it must be attacked by a number of different methods. Thus:—

(*a*) Adequate steps must be taken, by good propaganda in India, and by effective advertising of whatever supplies we could manage to send, to induce hoarders to release grain. It was most important to reverse the tendency which existed in one or two provinces for those in authority to encourage peasants to hold on to their grain.

(*b*) Increasing attention should be paid to measures to curb inflation. In particular an endeavour should be made to make more consumer goods available. It was appreciated that this might involve switching back to the manufacture of consumer goods some of the productive capacity at present devoted to stores required for the war effort.

(*c*) THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT reminded the War Cabinet that in January 1941 [1943] a demand had been made for an additional 600,000 tons of wheat, but in the result it had not been necessary to ship anything approaching this quantity. He expected that much the same would happen on this occasion. If a shortage occurred, Ceylon would feel the pinch first, and he therefore proposed that the first step should be to earmark sufficient grain for Ceylon's requirements. After the

"X" requirements of Ceylon and the Middle East had been met, it would be extremely difficult to find further ships which could be sent to Australia to fetch grain. If, however, the War Cabinet decided that some action should be taken, he thought that arrangements should now be made to import not more than 50,000 tons as a token shipment. This should, however, not be earmarked for India but should be ordered to Colombo to await instructions there. He also thought that it might be possible, as stated by the Shipping Committee, to make available up to 100,000 tons of barley from Iraq.

(*d*) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS enquired whether, if export of wheat from the southern Dominions were to be greatly increased, it would not be necessary to send them additional fertilizers. THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT confirmed that this was so.

(*e*) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA asked the War Cabinet not to take a firm decision to limit the help which would be afforded to India to the amount proposed by the Minister of War Transport.

The general view of the War Cabinet was that no further action should be decided upon at the present time; but that it would, of course, be open to the Secretary of State for India to raise the matter again at a later date in the light of the circumstances then existing.

The War Cabinet reached the following Conclusions:—

(1) Approval was given to action being taken on the lines proposed by the Minister of War Transport at "X".

(2) The Secretary of State for India was asked to telegraph to the Government of India, urging the need for further action, on the lines suggested in discussion, to combat inflation and to induce producers to part with grain more freely.

(3) A Standing Committee on Indian Financial Questions was appointed, comprising—

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*in the Chair*)
The Minister of Production
The Secretary of State for India
The Secretary of State for War
The President of the Board of Trade
The Paymaster-General

The first task which the Committee should undertake would be to consider steps to combat inflation in India. This Inquiry should cover such questions as whether some part of India's capacity, now devoted to

[4] See Vol. III, No. 332; also Nos. 265 and 282 in that Vol.

[5] The final version of this sentence began: 'Steps have been taken to meet this and had already met with a definite measure of success, but it was clear . . .' R/30/1/4: f 127.

war production, should not be switched back to the manufacture of consumer goods.

The second task the Committee should undertake would be to examine the growing indebtedness of the United Kingdom to India.[6]

[6] Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 106th Conclusions, Minute 2 (No. 61).

72

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PERSONAL AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *5 August 1943*

I thought your farewell speech[1] to the Assembly admirable in every way and am sending round copies to members of the Cabinet and of the House of Commons interested in India. But except for *The Times* I cannot say that the Press here have done justice to it. Perhaps that is not unnatural for their paper ration is very limited and anything in the nature of a connected argument is apt to be crowded out by items of hot news. Now if only you had threatened to do a "fast unto death" as the winding up of your Viceroyalty you could easily have had a page to yourself in every newspaper!

They could not have been more cross about it! Reasons (1) It was too true. (2) I did not mention Gandhi or the Congress!

L.

2. Turning to the more serious Indian food problem, I brought the matter up in Cabinet yesterday[2] and with not too good results. I need not tell you that I *spoke earnestly* about the dangers of the present situation. But the tendency was to treat your demand as in the main an anti-hoarder bluff and to concentrate on India's slowness in taking measures against inflation. Naturally I protested against this and pointed out that you had not only taken measures, but that they were already having their effect and that nothing that you could do in Indian conditions could wholly counteract the tendencies set up by your vast purchases from India with no sufficient absorption of the money thus let loose either by import or by domestic production of consumer goods. In the end all they would commit themselves to at present was 100,000 tons of barley from Iraq and 50,000 tons of wheat to go to Colombo to be used for Ceylon or India as the situation demanded. The idea is that without disclosing figures you might at any rate, on the strength of this, announce that substantial

I wish he hadn't!

L.

amounts are coming in as required. I had to accept, but pointed out that I might be compelled by events to reopen the matter within a very few weeks.

3. Cabinet also decided to set up under the Chancellor of the Exchequer a Committee including Oliver Lyttelton, Minister of Production, Dalton of the Board of Trade, Grigg and Professor Lord Cherwell with myself to consider both the immediate problem of inflation and the long-term problem of the accumulating sterling balances. On the whole I welcomed this as it may give me a better opportunity of educating these particular members of the Cabinet than one gets at a full-dress Cabinet meeting, while they in their turn may exercise a useful influence on Winston who is, I think, anyhow beginning to have a somewhat clearer idea of the nature of these problems.

4. I hope in any case to send you a telegram with some further suggestions, from our office point of view, on the subject of inflation. I still feel grave misgivings as to your Government's cautiousness in dealing with the rate of interest. My own inclination would be to issue a new loan with a big drive behind it at 5 per cent. for the big investor and to start a new Savings Bank or small savers loan based partially on a fairly low rate of interest, e.g. 3 or 4 per cent. but with a substantial prize-giving element included. The natural gambling instinct of humanity is one which has its value and which you cannot afford to neglect at a time like this. Besides the poor man who saves a few hundred rupees is likely not to waste a thousand rupees prize if he should be lucky enough to get it. A further advantage of the prize system is that the luck of individual recipients can be made the subject of press propaganda, not to speak of oral rumour, calculated to make the investment much more attractive than it really is. The prizes might, of course, be only partly paid outright now and the rest deferred until later. However, you will have had my more carefully thought out views in telegraph form before this reaches you.

P.S.V.—
I put this to F[inance] M[ember]. I think he is getting on a little with plans for a prize loan.
L.

5. Another thing that has occurred to me is whether this is not a great opportunity for getting a corporation like De Beers' to sell large quantities of diamonds in India and possibly to get other jewellers to co-operate. That is a form of import that requires no shipping to speak of and might, given Indian tastes and habits, draw quite a lot of redundant money off the market.

If this is so easy, why hasn't it occurred to De Beers!
L.

[1] See No. 68, note 2. [2] No. 71.

6. Winston is off once more[3] and I can only hope that he will now be able to settle on a Supreme Commander as well as on the general character of South East Asia operations in the near future. On all these matters I very much appreciate the helpful way in which Auchinleck has met this difficult and complicated question of relations between Commander-in-Chief, India, and the future Supreme Command. The further question of the Viceroy's Resident Minister capacity and Staff for that purpose will, I imagine, await Winston's return and for the immediate present we have been only dealing with that side of it which affects F.E.B., &c.

I am so glad and quite agree.
L.

7. With regard to Raisman, Maxwell, Twynam and Pilditch, it is, as you realize, difficult to give any present assurances. Wavell will undoubtedly wish to keep a free hand till he has had time to look round, though I quite agree that he ought to make up his mind on some of these points by the end of the year. I will certainly mention your high opinion of Twynam to him. I should also imagine that he would be likely to want to keep on Pilditch.

8. I hope by the way myself to stay away from the Office most of the week for the next two weeks. I hope very much, therefore, that Gandhi and his friends will not start any sort of trouble on the 9th which will interfere with this. Last year I had similarly planned a fortnight but never got away before Thursday any week.

Trust you have a nice holiday.
L.

9. Bevin is very anxious to have some further talks with Wavell and myself in September on the question of Indian social progress. The last memorandum[4] you enclosed struck me as a little over-pessimistic, though I fully realise all the difficulties and have been doing what I can to press them on our sanguine people like Cripps and Bevin. Also I entirely agree that if anything can be done, it should show itself in action, and that nothing could have a worse effect than our announcement from this end that a new policy of social reform is to be pressed from here in order to keep Indian politicians quiet.

The missionaries' appeal[5] is a tame and inconclusive document. It admits that you cannot negotiate with people who are not prepared to work on constitutional lines and then goes on to advocate a constituent assembly based apparently on the existing elected members in the Provinces. So far as public education is concerned, it would have been much better to publish McKenzie's private letter,[6] though even that tails off at the end.

[3] On 4 August, Mr Churchill left London to attend the Anglo-American Conference at Quebec which, amongst other matters, discussed plans for the invasion of France and the establishment

of the South East Asia Command. On 1 September Mr Churchill left Canada for further discussions with the President in Washington. He returned to Britain on 19 September.

[4] See No. 52, note 5. [5] See No. 53, note 12. [6] See No. 53, note 14.

73

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL "BARNES COURT", SIMLA, *6 August 1943*

No. 465.

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

Increased activities by Muslim Leaguers have led to further uneasiness in Ministerial and political circles. Captain Shaukat Hyat Khan's unpardonably indiscreet references to "Pakistan"[1] in the course of his recent tour came near to bringing matters to a head. His perambulations, as you are aware, have now been brought to an abrupt conclusion, but he has done enough to show that little, if any, reliance can be placed on his loyalty to his Leader. He has not entirely made up his mind whether to pose as the Repentant Sinner or the Injured Innocent: in the latter rôle he is sadly unconvincing and has met with no official applause. League newspapers, incited by Shaukat's vagaries, clamour more loudly than ever for a declaration that the Unionist Party is at an end, and a mischievous and unedifying controversy has been raging round the question whether the party in power is a creation of the League or a Coalition or a combination or merely a Union. There is a general demand that the Premier should come out into the open and make his position clear. It seems likely that he will be driven to do so as the result of the forthcoming Muslim League meeting at Delhi. The Premier is, I gather, determined to take his stand on the Sikander-Jinnah Pact[2] and to insist on retaining the term "Unionist" or "Unionist Coalition" (both of which expressions figure in the Pact) as the correct designation of his Party. His intentions are likely to be indicated to Jinnah before the meeting takes place. If Jinnah adopts a moderate line and decides not to force the issue, the existing truce may continue indefinitely. But, if he is set on pressing for outright subservience to the Muslim League, it is quite on the cards the Premier will conclude that his correct course is to resign, rather than see his Muslim followers gradually fading over into opposition under stress of promises and threats. I most sincerely hope that Jinnah's intransigeance will not bring matters to this pass. It may be unlikely enough

[1] See No. 55, note 2.

[2] Concluded at a meeting of the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow, 15 October 1937. It secured Muslim League support for the Punjab Unionist ministry.

that his supporters could at present succeed in working up a majority in the Punjab Assembly, but each of the main communities as represented in the House contains a fairly large proportion of unstable elements, and in many cases it would be rash to assume that public interest would prevail over personal considerations. Even if it be taken for granted that the deadlock would be of short duration and would eventually result in the return of stragglers to the Unionist fold, it is disquieting to think that a pre-eminently Muslim Government, which, whatever its defects, has carried on for so many years with reasonable efficiency, should now collapse through the machinations of the Qaid-i-Azam and be replaced by a system of administration set up under Section 93 of the Act.

2. The Congress party have shown very little liveliness of late and there is not much prospect of their successfully staging any serious disturbances in the Punjab on the approaching anniversary of last year's sensational adventure. Precautions have, however, been taken, and Railway security measures are being brought into force in the south-east of the Province. The Hindu Press has naturally displayed considerable anxiety about the chances of the Ministry subordinating themselves to the Muslim League, and there have been various attempts to effect a better understanding between Hindus and Sikhs.

3. The Akalis have been busy defending their position against assault. Master Tara Singh and Giani Kartar Singh have visited Simla and I have had a fairly long talk with them. It appears that, in spite of their almost incessant complaints that the Sikander-Baldev Pact[3] is being disregarded, they realise that much has been done in fulfilment of its intentions. A statement has been made by Master Tara Singh that his party will have nothing to do with a Muslim League Ministry, but it is a matter of opinion how far he would abide by this declaration if offered a substantial inducement to march in the opposite direction. His main interest is centred at present in a Bill for the Amendment of the Gurdwaras Act[4] whereby he hopes that he and his associates on the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee[5] will acquire control of revenues now in the hands of various Local Committees and will be allowed in the alleged interests of the Panth an increased degree of latitude in the general disposal of religious funds.

[3] See No. 49, note 2.

[4] *The Sikh Gurdwaras Act* (Punjab Act VIII of 1925) provided for the registration of Sikh temples and rules for their management.

[5] A committee established in 1920 for the central management of Sikh shrines. It later became the centre of Sikh politics.

74

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 253

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *7 August 1943, 6.40 am*

PERSONAL

17601. Your personal telegram of 29th July, No. 1601–S.[1] Food imports. Cabinet have now considered[2] your request for 500,000 tons of wheat and utmost that they are prepared to concede now is as follows:

(*a*) Subject to supply arrangements being feasible (Ministry of Food are taking this up), shipping to be provided for up to 100,000 tons of barley from Iraq, spread over reasonable period.

(*b*) Tonnage sufficient to lift 50,000 tons of wheat from Australia to be moved into position (there is none in position now and transfer will take about three months) but question whether it should be sent to India or some other Indian Ocean destination to be decided later. This decision is based on general admission that Indian Ocean area as a whole is under-tonnaged.

2. Cabinet were very impressed by seriousness of general economic position and urged especially necessity of further efforts to counter inflationary factors (in particular by endeavouring to make more consumer goods available), of inducing hoarders to release grain by forceful propaganda, including effective advertising of whatever supplies may become assured (though without mention of quantities), and of eliminating any remaining tendency among Provincial authorities to encourage peasants to hold on to their grain. It was decided to set up at once ministerial standing committee under chairmanship of Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose initial task should be to consider the economic and financial position of India as a whole from the standpoint of combating inflation. I shall of course keep the food position before this Committee as part of wider problem. Meanwhile I fear that above reply affords no basis for any immediate public announcement.

[1] No. 65. [2] No. 71.

75

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir J. Herbert (Bengal)

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

MOST IMMEDIATE *8 August 1943*

PERSONAL

No. 1686–S. I deal below with a variety of matters in connection with the Bengal position which are causing me much uneasiness, and on which I should welcome your very early comment.

2. I am disturbed in the first place by reports I receive of the inefficiency of the Calcutta Corporation; the state of the streets, non-collection of refuse, weakness of water supply, &c. I seem to have had no report from you on this subject, or any reference in any letter prior to your letter of 5th August.[1] I shall be grateful for a telegraphic report giving your own judgment of the seriousness of the position and the extent to, and means by which it is remediable. We may have to consider taking a very firm hand with the Corporation, and I would wish your report to cover that.

3. Finance Member has represented to me very strongly the critical financial position into which your Government is drifting owing to its reluctance to face up to the necessity of imposing taxation; its failure to co-operate in anti-inflationary measures, even in areas where money is admittedly flowing freely, &c. I recognise that war conditions have placed a heavy burden on Bengal and that you have had to cope with cyclones and other serious natural disasters. But the Province has not imposed further substantial taxation, though the scope for it exists, and has remained content with revenue deficits of a crore to a crore and a half while insistently demanding ways and means advance and grants from the Centre. The latest request for eight crores ways and means advance has been refused pending certain assurances from your Government. I shall welcome your comment on position to which there has been no reference of importance in any of your recent reports.

4. I am disturbed also to hear reports (which I recognise may be incorrect) that Birla and the Marwaris have apparently been allowed by your Government to take over a substantial responsibility for opening communal kitchens in Calcutta, selling rice at concession rates, &c. I have had no report from you on this subject, and no comment on the serious reflection on your Government which the existence of this state of things if correct would represent, for you will realise the extent to which it would admit of being regarded as an abdication by Government of its functions. Please let me have a full telegraphic report as to the facts, with your comments if these suggestions are well-founded.

5. I am bound to add my sense of most uneasiness at handling by your Government of the food problem. (You should see in that connection Wood's letter to Suhrawardy of 3rd August.)[2] Thus they sent up no one until I addressed you personally to the recent Conference. I recognise your difficulties. But I cannot resist the feeling that greater energy and drive, and better administrative organisation, are called for. Are you satisfied that Ayyar (who for your entirely personal information did not I gather greatly impress the Food Policy Committee) has the personality and resolution required? I am sending you Kirby to help over rationing. But the Provinces were warned months ago of the possibility of rationing; problem is I should have thought eased in Bengal by rationing schemes of European firms, and I would have expected a scheme to have been worked out long ago. In the same connection I gather from my Food Department that there is reason for serious complaint at your Government's handling of the control and distribution of sugar in Bengal. Are you satisfied as to the administrative arrangements for dealing with this?

6. You will understand in the light of the above that I am far from happy about present situation in Bengal, and I would be grateful for very early report on points I have mentioned.

[1] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43. [2] See No. 70, note 16.

76

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *10 August 1943*

Dear Linlithgow,
I write in reply to your personal telegram No. 1686–S, dated the 9th [? 8th] August 1943, and in continuation of my personal telegram No. 127,[1] dated the 10th August 1943.

2. The reference in my letter of the 5th August[2] to the inefficiency of the Calcutta Corporation was not intended to imply inactivity on the part of Government in the civic sphere. In actual fact the new Government have taken vigorous action to deal with the present state of affairs. Extra petrol has been supplied to enable the afternoon conservancy clearances to be made throughout the city, and this has improved the condition of the streets. Assistance is being given to the Corporation in obtaining spare parts for those conservancy vehicles which are at present unusable. Under the Bengal

[1 and 2] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43.

Vagrancy Ordinance, 1943, 359 beggars have been rounded up, and further action continues daily. Many others have left the city fearing arrest, and these steps have brought about a welcome change for the better. For the purpose of increasing the city's water supply Government have issued 10 directions to the Corporation regarding the repair and improvement of boilers, turbines and filter beds, and the Corporation have agreed to comply with these. Further measures to increase the Corporation's efficiency are under examination in the light of Gurner's recent report on the Corporation's finances, and I hope that it may be possible to evolve such measures shortly. The Calcutta Municipal Act, 1923, does not empower the Provincial Government to supersede the Corporation, and supersession is likely to result in such far-reaching political repercussions that I doubt whether any Bengal Ministry will have the courage to introduce, or whether the Bengal Legislature will ever agree to pass, the legislation required to arm Government with the necessary powers. Our present intention, therefore, is to issue directions under Section 17 of that Act, with the object of taking action under Section 18 if these directions are not complied with to the satisfaction of Government. The powers conferred by Section 18 are limited in scope, but could be made quite considerable in effect, and I am inclined to think that they are perhaps sufficient for the time being.

3. As regards the financial position, you will see from my fortnightly reports for the first and second halves of January last[3] that the Huq Ministry accepted additional taxation proposals amounting to Rs. 33 lakhs, but rejected the proposed doubling of the provincial Sales Tax, which was estimated to bring in Rs. 50 lakhs. The former proposals were approved by the legislature and are embodied in the Bengal Finance Act, 1943, my assent to which was published on the 15th April of this year. You will appreciate that taxation proposals, which must involve legislation, must also in a Ministerial Province involve political considerations, and that the communal effect of an agricultural income-tax is likely to be considerable in a Province where most of the landlords are Hindus. The first obligation of the present Ministry, which took office on the 24th April, was to pass the existing budget. The passage of the budget was obstructed in July by the ruling of the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, and we have asked for the advice of your Government in regard to the best method of extricating ourselves from the present impasse. I feel that it is impossible for the present Ministry to meet the legislature with taxation proposals until it has succeeded in getting the budget through. On the other hand, I entirely agree with the necessity for additional taxation, and proposals for doubling the Sales Tax and imposing an agricultural income-tax will be considered in Cabinet on the 12th August next.

4. As regards anti-inflation measures, I would ask you to see my Chief Secretary's letter, dated the 2nd August 1943,[4] to Griffiths, in which the Bengal

Government's attitude towards the proposed savings drive is set out in detail. We feel that the Government of India's assumptions cannot altogether apply to Bengal where, notwithstanding increased avenues of employment in certain areas, standards of living have generally been depressed more than elsewhere. We consider that the repayment of loans is the first requirement, and instructions were issued about one month ago to all District Officers to expedite the collection of loans and to encourage the payment of arrears of rent.

5. Turning to the food situation, I feel myself that Ayyar is a sound man. I should have preferred a European officer for the post of Director, but Pinnell, who held the appointment for some time, broke down under the strain of it, and we are so short of good European officers of the necessary calibre and experience that we have not been able to find a substitute. The rationing schemes of the European firms, for the introduction of which I personally pressed, have undoubtedly eased the general problem of rationing. Nevertheless, the problem remains considerable, and the working out of details for the rationing of a great city like Calcutta, with its attendant industrial area, is bound to take time. As I pointed out in my letter of the 5th August, we have not been able to utilise the Corporation services in the way that we should like, but nevertheless much preliminary work has been done. Stevens carried through successfully the food census, which was taken on the 7th and 8th August, and with Kirby's assistance, he is now preparing final plans for complete rationing.

6. That portion of your telegram which relates to "control" has been received in an incomplete form. I understand from Williams, however, that it relates to the control of wheat prices and sugar distribution. I shall investigate the administrative arrangements which have been made for dealing with these two subjects and will let you have a further report regarding them later on.

7. It has always been the practice in Bengal to encourage philanthropic and charitable assistance in times of scarcity, and in accordance with this principle our Civil Supplies Department issued instructions some time ago to the effect that Government would provide foodgrains at concession rates to philanthropic organisations for distribution in the Calcutta area and outside, provided that certain conditions were fulfilled. These conditions were, that the organisation should supply a list of persons to whom distribution would be made, that it should observe a prescribed quantity and quality for the food to be distributed, that not more than one meal *per diem* should be distributed to one individual, and that Government should exercise general supervision over the location and administration of distribution centres. It is in terms of these instructions that the distribution of gruel by various organisations

[3] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43. [4] Not printed.

(including Birla and certain Marwaris) is being carried out; and all these arrangements are under official supervision. In this view of the matter I do not myself think that arrangements of this kind can reasonably be thought to constitute a reflection upon Government's ability to distribute food or an abdication of functions properly appertaining to itself.

Yours sincerely,

J. A. HERBERT

77

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *12 August 1943, 1.40 pm*
Received: 12 August, 12.30 pm

No. 1721–S. Following a series of editorials critical of our policy as expounded in my speech[1] to Legislature, *News Chronicle* in highly critical leading article is today quoted at length by Reuters. After usual patter about futility of inviting incarcerated leaders to confer together leading article proceeds to describe Government of India as virtual dictatorship. I must warn you that this failure to mobilise the slightest support in any British newspaper for the policy of His Majesty's Government and Government of India, which policy commands the unanimous support of my Executive Council, and to get such favourable comment transmitted to India, is damaging to our position here and seriously discouraging to our supporters. I am convinced that our policy commands widespread public support in the United Kingdom, and I am unable to resist the conclusion that the position complained of points to a serious failure of your propaganda and publicity machine. Again I would have thought that your own great influence with key men in the newspaper world might well have insured us against this purely negative reaction amongst papers ordinarily favourable to Government policy. Incidentally I hope you may take some early opportunity to remind people that our withdrawal from the business of constitution-making in favour of Indians themselves is due to Indians' insistence that nothing will induce them to accept any constitution not drawn up by themselves.

[1] See No. 68, note 2.

78

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *13 August 1943, 6.5 pm*
Received: 13 August, 5.30 pm

No. 1742–S. Your personal telegram of 7th August, No. 17601.[1] Food imports. I fully appreciate difficulties that confront the Cabinet. But I am bound in duty to represent critical nature of the difficulties that will face us here unless decision contained in your telegram is modified. A firm promise of 100,000 tons of barley and the possibility of small additional quantity of wheat will go nowhere in meeting our essential demands, and after consultation and in full agreement with Commander-in-Chief, Finance Member and Food Member, I am bound in terms to warn the Cabinet that the Government of India and I cannot be responsible for the continuing stability of India now, or for her capacity to serve as a base against Japan next year unless we have appropriate help in prospect. You will be familiar from the Press with the critical situation that faces us in Bengal. And distinct signs are beginning to emerge that the wheat position in the Punjab is hardening against us with higher prices and a diminishing flow from the cultivators to the markets. The addition of the transport breakdown owing to the very major breaches in communication with Eastern India which have followed on the recent floods, and which there is no hope of our being able to remedy effectively under at least a couple of months has further aggravated situation and brought out vital importance of being able to run food directly to Calcutta by sea (I would put assistance by way of putting foodgrains into Calcutta at minimum of two ships or fifteen thousand tons a month; and I would classify this as a security operation essential to the lines of communication of the Army). On the general Food position I can only repeat what has already been said in my personal telegram of 29th July, No. 1601–S,[2] and convey to His Majesty's Government in the most formal manner possible the considered warning given earlier in this telegram. If they are not prepared to modify their decision we here can take no responsibility for the consequences. And it is essential that that should be fully understood at this stage, and fact that what is in issue is not merely feeding India, but our capacity to wage war against Japan.

[1] No. 74. [2] No. 65.

79

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *13 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 1743–S. Please see my personal telegram of today. Food Imports. Cabinet do not seem to realise seriousness of position and I must make it perfectly clear to you that if they stick to their guns they must carry full responsibility whether in terms of difficulty of basing forthcoming operations on India or of internal conditions in this country. If you want further ammunition let me know, and let me know equally if there is any way in which I can make my personal telegram more effective or further strengthen your hands. We feel very strongly here that Cabinet are closing their eyes to seriousness of considerations urged in my personal telegram of 29th July[1] and, as I have made clear, my present personal telegram has full support of the Chief on the Military side, as well as of Finance and Food Members.

[1] No. 65.

80

Mrs Hendy to Mr Raman[1]

MSS. EUR. F. 125/130

Undated

Dear Mr Raman,

Our good friend who heard Ambassador Phillips speak to the group at Harvard that you will be addressing on Wednesday has suggested the following approach for you.

1. How is India governed?

P. said that it was governed by four men—Churchill, Amery, the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief. He said that the Viceroy's Council is a rubber stamp and the Provincial Governors dictators. That Churchill and Amery know nothing of India except what the Viceroy tells them. That the old Guard of Provincial Governors is still completely Victorian in outlook and does not want to grant Indian independence, and that the trappings of democracy, as far as they exist, are only a kind of modern frosting of the old Imperial cake.

2. Can the British maintain the *status quo* until the war is won?

P. said they could not—that the situation was deteriorating and that the lid would blow off. He was truly worried about this, particularly of course with reference to the large American army which is out on a limb there and might get cut off. He said he knew the British believed they could hold things steady, but he did not agree with them, and thought their Blimpishness blinded them to the danger.

3. How could Indian independence be achieved?

P. said that the British believed that withdrawal or any other move now would mean a blood-bath, or pretended to believe it—he did not. He is all for starting now by making the Viceroy's Council real, by putting on it men chosen by Indians, and giving them real power; a real Cabinet instead of a rubber stamp. And the second thing he urged was a proclamation by the King-Emperor saying that he really had the independence of India at heart.

As I told you, he made it plain that he deplored the Indian leaders' imprisonment without once referring to the reason why they are in prison, or how they could get out. I suspect that 99 per cent. of his audience thinks that they are simply imprisoned because they would not accept the Cripps' proposals.

Well, that is quite a lot to get into twenty minutes—but there will be questions; and Phillips got his into twenty minutes!

I hope these notes will be of some use to you; if you can make this group understand something of the truth about India it will be worth it, as they are pretty important, and their net spreads rather wise [wide?].

Sincerely yours,

KYKIE [?KYTHÉ] HENDY

[1] Enclosed in letter 1032 of 14 August from Mr Hennessy (Information Officer to the Indian Agent General in the United States) to Sir G. Laithwaite.

81

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/I/1/219: ff 242–5

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *15 August 1943, 1.45 am*
Received: 15 August

18359. Your telegram dated 12 August, 1721–S.[1] I fully share your concern over the line taken editorially by the *News Chronicle*, *Daily Herald*, *Manchester Guardian*, and *Glasgow Herald*. But you seriously misjudge the situation when

No. 77.

you infer that these editorials indicate "a failure to mobilise the slightest support in any British newspaper . . ." The fact that only four such articles have so far appeared in a British Press of over a 100 daily newspapers—and those in organs always disposed to be critical—cannot be termed unsatisfactory or discouraging.

2. Overwhelming majority of newspapers in this country, truly reflecting public opinion generally, have consistently recognised the difficulties inherent in the political situation in India, and that particularly in view of paramount importance of defence of India to successful prosecution of the war there is no practical alternative to policy of H.M.G. and Government of India (and particularly the measures taken to deal with the Civil Disobedience Movement and the Congress leaders).

3. In these circumstances (and having regard to the quite outstanding developments in the war situation which coincided with your address to the Legislature), I am sure you will recognise that there was no particular call, on the occasion of your address, for the newspapers here to launch out into a new defence, editorially, of your policy which has of course all along commanded general acceptance both in Parliament and in the Press.

4. Nevertheless I am equally disappointed at the lack of publicity in this country for your address. Factors beyond the control of my Information Department (on which I am sorry that, in the absence of full appreciation of the position, you have passed so severe a censure) operating against adequate attention were referred to in some detail in No. 17589[2] dated 6th August from my Adviser on Publicity to your Private Secretary. I am sure that, in spite of the difficulties, the steps which my Information Department would have taken as a matter of course if they had had any warning of your address, or, better still, if they had had a summary of it in advance, would not have been altogether fruitless. As it was, they had no opportunity whatsoever either to stimulate publicity for the address or to suggest to the host of friendly editors with whom they are in touch that editorial support would be timely. The lesson, quite frankly, is that, given the most favourable circumstances, one cannot afford to allow any policy speech, whether made in India or in this country, to drift through on newspaper tapes and take it for granted that, without special measures, it will receive adequate treatment, especially in these days of restrictions on newspaper space, either in the news columns or editorially.

[2] L/I/1/219.

82

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *16 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have no letter from you to answer, but would like to comment on one or two things before I go off on tour on the early morning of the 18th.

2. What is frankly bothering me most as I write is the Bengal position. I sent you by the last bag copy of my letter to Herbert,[1] and I send you by this bag copy of an earlier telegram[2] which I had sent him, and of his reply.[3] In my telegram I touched on the complaints I was receiving about the weakness of the Calcutta Corporation, and the apparent lack of any governmental pressure to keep it up to the mark; on the record of the Bengal Government in the financial field (basing myself on Raisman's note[4] of which I sent you copy last week); on their handling of food; and on the sugar position, &c. Herbert's reply, which I have no doubt was composed by his skilful and experienced Secretary, Williams, wisely aims at bringing down the temperature and treating my various enquiries as routine enquiries in relation to a situation which does not present any startling difficulty, and to all of which a perfectly reasonable answer admits of being given! That is good tactics, and has the desirable result, from Herbert's point of view, of leaving me not much further forward! And I must of course accept also that the replies to my complaints have a certain plausibility.

3. The fact remains that I have very little real confidence in Herbert. I can carry him in the ordinary way, and have been able to do so for the last couple of years, though as our correspondence shows, there have been times when I have been very disposed to think that he ought to go. Had it not been for the impossibility of getting rid of him and so presenting Fazlul Huq with a resounding victory over his handling of Huq's own resignation and that of the Huq Ministry last March,[5] there would have been much to be said for making a change then. But for the reason I have just given a change would not have been wise. The worst of it is that we cannot look forward to a period of peace—indeed Bengal will be right in the front of the battle—and a variety of problems may spring up there which will require firm, decisive handling, and a far better intellectual equipment and a much stronger personality than Herbert possesses. And in the interest of my successor I should be much happier were the administration of the Province in different hands before he took over. I should welcome

[1] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43. [2] No. 75. [3] No. 76. [4] MSS. EUR. F. 125/12.
[5] See Vol. III, Nos. 627, 637 and 642.

some indication of your own reaction, when you have read this further correspondence, and in the light of any discussion that you may have been able to have had with Wavell, who of course is in a position to form a quite independent judgement of Herbert and his capacity. That would help me to make up my own mind as to what, if any, advice I should tender to you as regards a change.

4. I received today the Prime Minister of Nepal, who has been so kind as to make a special journey from Nepal for the purpose of saying good-bye. He was in very much better physical form than I had expected to find him, and struck me as quite alert, and showing no signs of the serious physical strain which repeated attacks of dysentery must have imposed upon him. Indeed he tells me that he intends to continue in office until he can retire "with the sound of victory in his ears". At his own request, we are treating his visit as secret, until he has returned, and he is travelling strictly *incognito*.

5. The question of retaliation against South Africa was discussed at considerable length in Council last week.[6] I did my best, as you may imagine, to try to divert my colleagues to consideration of the possible disadvantages, from the point of view of India, of certain of the action proposed, both in the commercial and in the general political field. But feeling ran very high, and I fear that my efforts did not succeed in more than securing an adjournment until the practical effect of certain retaliatory action could be more closely examined by the Commerce and the Supply Departments. The business is to come up again tomorrow, but I shall not be able to report, as my letter will have issued before Council meets. There were no absentees from the discussion, and opinion was unanimous (I include in that unanimity the Commander-in-Chief, Maxwell, Raisman and Benthall) that given the strength of feeling in this country it would be necessary to consider some action against South Africa. Ramaswami Mudaliar, that temperate man, went so far as to say that if the Commander-in-Chief thought of raising forces to attack South Africa in the field (a contingency not, I trust, likely to arise!) he, Ramaswami, would despite his age be the first to volunteer, and that if he felt like that, Council could imagine the intense bitterness of feeling among younger and more active men in this country at the thought of the slights and oppression to which in their view Indians in South Africa had been subjected. The general feeling was that at the point things had reached action of some sort was necessary, and that mere representations would not meet the case so far as this country was concerned; and there was an insistent demand, backed by the great majority of my colleagues, that notice of denunciation of the trade understanding should be given after a further report had been made to Council of the exact economic effect of the termination of all trade between the two countries. As you may imagine, I did not fail to draw the attention of Council to the danger, both to the war

effort and to India's future trade, of embarking upon economic sanctions, and I thought it well to remind them that even if they were not prepared to send gunny bags to South Africa, Dundee could probably do so, and certainly would, if she could, be very glad to pick up that piece of trade. But tempers were too high to give reason much of a chance of a hearing, and I rather suspect that that may be the case when the discussion is resumed tomorrow.

[6] On 30 July the Indian Legislative Assembly had discussed the South African 'pegging' legislation of the previous April which had restricted the acquisition and occupation of land by Indians in Natal and had extended, until 1946, similar legislation relating to the Transvaal. The Assembly unanimously passed an amended motion 'that the position arising out of the recent pegging legislation in South Africa be taken into consideration with a view to enforce the Reciprocity Act and adopt measures to redress the grievances of Indians in South Africa'. *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. III, 1943 (Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1943), pp. 221–54.

83

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 245

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *17 August 1943*
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *Received: 18 August*

877. Your private and personal telegram 1743–S.[1] Food imports. I have circulated your personal telegram 1742–S[2] to Cabinet omitting reference to your 1601–S[3] of July 29th which I have preferred to keep in reserve. I have also telegraphed the whole text to the Prime Minister at Quebec drawing his attention to the grave nature of your warning as to effect of food shortage on whole future operations based on India and enquiring his wishes whether whole matter should again come before Cabinet.

[1] No. 79. [2] No. 78. [3] No. 65.

84

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *17 August 1943, 3 pm*
PERSONAL *Received: 17 August, 4 pm*

No. 1783–S. Your personal telegram of 15th August, No. 18359.[1] Publicity. Many thanks. I have I think made clear to you the very great importance which I attach to this matter. With only a few weeks to go you will I know

[1] No. 81.

appreciate that I am thinking not of myself but of my successor, and that my telegram was designed to bring home very clearly to you my strong sense of the importance of getting over at home material such as that contained in my recent speech and of securing immediate transmission to India of favourable press comment.

2. I quite appreciate your possible difficulties in getting comment in the major friendly papers on the day following the speech. But it will not have escaped you that the hostile papers found no difficulty whatever in commenting and that at very considerable length. I should have thought interval of twenty-four hours or even forty-eight would have made very little difference so far as this country is concerned. As it is great attention has been focussed on the complete absence of one word of support from friendly press, and on the activity of the hostile press. The *Hindustan Times* has drawn pointed attention to it. Rajagopalachariar has thought it sufficiently important to make it the basis of another of his come-backs into public life.[2] It is here that I feel that I am entitled to be critical, though with full appreciation of your difficulties. Even if all the material was not available for use by the next morning, I do feel it would have been well to get publicity for the important statements in the speech or some reference to them in the newspapers of the next day or two. I cannot I fear agree that situation is such as to render it unnecessary to continue to organise active support for statements of policy by the Viceroy. The absence of specific support and reference by home press is always taken here (I agree completely unreasonably) as meaning that support is lacking. That generates critical comment here which is telegraphed back to London, there feeds the hostile press, and in due course produces more critical material for telegraphing to India.

3. But having said so much I have no desire to take this matter any further. I have given certain instructions to the Department of Information and Broadcasting in the light of your telegram No. 17589,[3] which will help to improve procedure, though I must warn you that in no circumstances is it likely to be possible to telegraph a summary well in advance (in the present case my speech reached finality only some 12 hours before it was delivered). I repeat that I am essentially concerned in the light of long experience here to protect the position for my successor, and to emphasise that however good the position may at any time be at home, much of the value of that healthy atmosphere is wasted so far as this country is concerned if no expression is given to it in press comment of one kind or other.

[2] At a speech in Madras on 17 August 1943, Mr Rajagopalachari renewed his call on Britain to change her policy towards India and stressed that Indian unity could only be obtained by conceding self-determination to Muslims.

[3] L/I/1/219.

85

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *17 August 1943*

I forwarded your further anxious telegram[1] about the food situation to Winston at Quebec and only hope it may have some effect. Leathers is with him and I have urged Winston to get Leathers to consider the situation again.

2. Meanwhile, we had the first meeting yesterday of the Kingsley Wood Committee which has been set up to study the general problem of Indian inflation and also the sterling balances.[2] I put before them the whole case of the extent to which India's relatively primitive economy has been strained to breaking point in every direction and I hope it has made some impression on the more reasonable members of the Committee. Grigg was very anxious to know whether I thought the inflation was mainly economic or political, i.e. due to depression about the war as well as to active Congress mischief-making. I thought it was impossible to disentangle the two factors, but that obviously if the economic factor were not there and potent the other factors wouldn't produce much effect, and I could only express the hope that the various measures taken on the economic side would be reinforced by victories elsewhere. I urged Kingsley Wood to increase his sales of gold in India, and also put before him the question whether an appreciable amount of money could not be drawn off the market at this moment by the selling of diamonds and jewellery generally. I have no doubt one could get the diamond syndicate here and possibly a reputable jeweller like Cartier to send out representatives who could unload considerable amounts. On the whole, the Committee's conclusion was that the most effective anti-inflationary measure might be a pretty drastic revision of British and Middle Eastern requirements from India in the way not only of raw materials but also manufactured supplies which might not only act as an immediate check on an unbalanced expenditure but, by holding off the market, also have some effect on prices and put the Government of India in a stronger position to check profiteering.

3. In that connection a comic, but also disquieting, relief was furnished by the antics of Professor Lord Cherwell, whom Winston regards as an authority on everything and especially on India!
He started off by arguing that we spend a million a day on India and that only two per cent. of our supplies come from India. So far as I can see, the two per cent. may refer to actual munitions sent

Lindemann! Good God!
L.

[1] No. 78. [2] The minutes of this meeting are on L/F/7/687.

outside of India, whereas of course the million includes everything bought from India as well as the cost of Indian troops overseas. The next point was that not only was there fantastic profiteering encouraged by the Government of India, who get most of it back out of Excess Profits Tax, but that the rupee was in fact worth only 6*d*. and that by pegging it at 1*s*.-6*d*. the Government of India was charging this country three times the value of everything it buys from India! That, but for the pegging of the rupee, it would, in view of the unbalanced nature of our transactions, probably be standing at about 5*s*. at this moment, does not seem to have occurred to the worthy professor. The trouble is that I doubt whether any argument gets into his head and that whatever the Committee reports, he may still go on dinning into Winston's receptive ears the kind of nonsense he has been talking to us.

4. You must have been much relieved, as well as have felt justified, by the quiet way in which August 9th passed off. I hope it will also have given courage to your Executive and made them feel that they can face any such further incident as a Gandhi fast with confidence. I should certainly agree with the practically unanimous opinion of all whom you have consulted that another fast should be seen through with complete firmness, and that publicity, while allowed from the start, should be kept within the narrowest practicable limits. The one moot point seems to be whether, if he declares another fast, he should be given the same option as last time, namely of fasting outside. On this I confess I have a fairly open mind and realise that there may be some tactical advantage in taking the same line as last time and in throwing on Gandhi himself the onus of dying in detention if he insists on doing it.

86

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir B. Glancy (Punjab)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *17 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

My dear Glancy,

I owe you an answer to your letter of August the 6th[1] for which I am most grateful, but I had held this up until I could write to you about the wheat position.

2. I enclose a copy of a letter[2] which is being sent by my Food Department to your Government. As you will see it raises the matter of wheat exports from the Punjab which I know has been a great anxiety to you as it has to me.

3. I have seen enough of this business to be quite sure that the success or failure of our food administration does in fact depend very largely on the result of the Punjab efforts to comply with the basic plan as now modified,[3] and of course it goes without saying that on the success of our food administration depends the control of inflation and in many respects our ability to make India a possible base for offensive operations against Japan.

4. We need not discuss for a moment the responsibility for the failure in the critical first quarter of the harvest year to export the amount anticipated. I realise that transportation has been a great difficulty and there have no doubt been many other obstacles besides.

5. But the question of future administration is so critical that I am bound to lay a great deal of emphasis upon it. I should like to be sure that your Food Supplies Directorate is strong enough in personnel. It seems to me that with a million tons of wheat to despatch a very strong directorate must be necessary. Incidentally I was rather shaken by a recent report[4] which mentioned that your Director of Food Supplies "proposed to inspect the offices of the Purchasing Agents from time to time". This seemed to me rather like proposing to close the stable door on an empty stable, and I should have thought that he would have been carrying out inspections regularly during the last five months. Again, there seem to be legitimate doubts about the efficiency of at least one of your purchasing agents. Purchase and despatch will of course have to be perfectly co-ordinated; I understand that at present it is not being found necessary to use more than half the increased allotment of railway wagons.

6. Then there is the matter of propaganda. I should have thought that the poisonous stuff put out by Chhotu Ram would need strong antidotes such as a vigorous counter-propaganda campaign under the lead of the bigger Zamindars including Khizar. It is disturbing to hear that the quantities of wheat forthcoming from such districts as Shahpur and Sheikhupura, where I understand there are big landlords, are very small.

7. I have mentioned several detailed points which you might have expected would only appear in an official letter to your Government, but my preoccupation even with details is due to the fact that I am quite convinced that efficient administration in this matter must be secured at all costs. To put it quite clearly I mean that the procurement of the necessary surplus wheat from the Punjab is more important than any political considerations, any interests of the Ministers, and even, in the last resort, the continuance of Provincial Autonomy in the Punjab.

8. When I say this I say it after full deliberation and realise how much it means. The Punjab Ministry have ever since the beginning of the war been

[1] No. 73. [2] Not printed. [3] See No. 27, note 1. [4] Not printed.

splendid in their outspoken support of the war effort and we owe the Punjab an immense debt which is only partly on account of the Punjab's proud position as contributor of almost half the Indian Army. Again, apart from the war effort the Ministry has put up a remarkably good show in many other ways since 1937, and the last thing I want is to see the Punjab under a Section 93 régime. Nor do I think for a moment that this is necessary. I believe that Khizar will play the game and will take the other Ministers with him, but I am sure you will have to put the matter clearly to him and impress on him what decisive importance I attach to it. On my part I shall be only too glad to give you all possible assistance here and to do my best to ensure that transportation facilities are made available. Finally I repeat that my sole concern is with the future and that I am levelling no charges against the Punjab with regard to the past. I shall hope to hear from you as soon as possible about the action your Government have been able to take on the official reference.

9. I was interested in what you said about relations between the Muslim League and the Ministry, and quite agree with your irritation at Shaukat. The postponement of the Muslim League Working Committee Meeting has at any rate given you useful breathing space.

10. There seem to have been no disturbances of importance anywhere on August the 9th, which is satisfactory. The Congress are very quiet everywhere at present. On the other hand I am sorry to hear that Khaksar activities have not subsided in the Punjab. The Khaksars will want very careful watching, and I for one shall be prepared to hit them very hard if they do not abide by their undertakings.

11. I am glad to hear that serious crime has tended to decrease. Your police seem to have been most active and to have had a series of successes recently.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

87

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, MYSORE, *20 August 1943*

I wrote to you on the 16th[1] and not very much has happened since then. I left Delhi by air at 7.30 on the morning of Wednesday the 18th and reached Madras after a break of an hour outside Secunderabad for a picnic lunch shortly before 4 the same afternoon. I found Arthur Hope and his people in very good heart, and devoted myself to an excessively heavy programme of interviews,

inspections and conversations. The Europeans asked me to lunch at the Madras Club where there were the usual farewell speeches, and the Indian notables asked me to take tea with them at their mixed club, the Cosmopolitan Club, where again I had to make a short speech. Nothing could have been more friendly or appreciative than the general attitude of the Europeans and Indians alike; and I will confess that I was not a little touched to find at the end of so long a term, in which so many difficult problems have had to be faced—and solved too, on a basis that inevitably could not command a hundred per cent. acceptance from all sections of the public—that feeling should be what it quite clearly was.

2. Arthur Hope had nothing very particular in the way of local problems to discuss. He was extremely anxious that I should get your orders about the abolition of prohibition in the four prohibition districts as soon as possible; and I told him that I had supported his general view and that I had no doubt that I should be shortly hearing from you. He gave me certain statistics[2] which I send you with this letter, which were designed to show that the situation in the districts affected was deteriorating as shown in terms of convictions, and that it was very desirable without further delay to secure the necessary approval of his proposals.

3. I do not think there is anything else in the local situation in the Madras Presidency that is worth reporting to you. He gave a very good account of general feeling and confirmed what one had of course assumed, viz. that the great improvement in our military position was very directly reflected in the attitude of people in the Province.

4. I left Madras by aeroplane this morning at 9 o'clock and reached Bangalore about 10.15. I spent there a most interesting hour going over the Hindustan Aircraft Factory about which we have heard so much. I was taken round by Mr. Pawley. The achievement is very remarkable, and one could not help being deeply impressed on another aspect of the case by their really first class assortment of machine tools, &c., and the excellence of their shops. Thence I went to visit an institution for which I could claim some credit myself, viz. the Dairy Institute at Bangalore which has been established in my time and which is doing work of very real value in the dairying field. I had lunch with the Resident, who was accompanied by Wylie, and in the afternoon motored to Mysore where I hope to spend a day or two. I have only had a few words with His Highness—he seems in good form: but I shall hope to have an opportunity of talking to him at greater leisure tomorrow.

[Para. 5, on the Italian situation; and para. 6, on American ambitions in the Middle East, omitted.]

[1] No. 82. [2] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

7. I discussed in my last letter the present position in respect of this proposed retaliatory action against South Africa. I mentioned to you that I had warned Council of the dangers of sacrificing substantial Indian interests in order to gratify an immediate desire to retaliate—the reasons for which I fully appreciated, and with which indeed those of us who hold responsibility for government in India could not but sympathise to a certain extent—for the legislation which has recently been passed in South Africa. As my last letter will have shown you, Council were then unanimous that something must be done; but I begged, and with success, that before we started to tackle the South Africans we should first of all get quite clear as to what exactly we wanted them to do if an ultimatum of the kind desired by Council was to be sent to them; and secondly that before sending that ultimatum we should have the position examined by the Departments of Commerce and Supply and get their report as to what the effect of the action desired by my colleagues would be on the interests served by those departments. I thought it better as a matter of tactics to keep the question of inter-Imperial relations and of wider relations with South Africa in reserve, for it was clear that the argument was not one that it would have been wise to develop or to do more than touch on in such a manner that while its importance was brought home to those present, no excuse was given for a lengthy debate on merits.

The memoranda produced by the two departments were of much importance, and we took them in Council on the 17th August. The Commerce Department advised that so far as the interests for which it was responsible were concerned India had nothing to lose and might indeed have something to gain by the adoption of the retaliatory action proposed. The Supply Department memorandum, on the other hand, showed that in respect of a large number of items action of this nature could not but seem likely to be in the first place strongly prejudicial to various aspects of our war effort; secondly, that it might be extremely difficult to work in on the technical side with certain features of lease-lend and with the commitments flowing from the existence of the Eastern Group Supply Council, &c. The Department of Indians Overseas were unshaken by this memorandum, and were all for going ahead with their ultimatum, and they had strong support from Mudaliar. But it shortly became evident that in the first place the Commander-in-Chief and certain other of my colleagues were not any longer prepared to support action if it was going to have a prejudicial effect on war effort; secondly, that there was a strong feeling among certain of my colleagues, which, I need not say, I wholly shared, and made clear that I shared, that it would be the height of folly to denounce the most favoured nation arrangement with the South Africans, if, on the expiry of the 3 months' notice which was to be given, we were to find that we were not really in a position to take any further action. I warned my colleagues that on such experience as I had of the South Africans there was nothing that would please

them better, given the height to which tempers had risen, than to call our bluff; and, if they found that we had in fact deprived ourselves (as well as them) of the benefit of the most favoured nation clause without being able to hit them in any other way, to do all in their power to make us feel our unwisdom and to hit us hard. The outcome of the discussion, I will confess to my great relief, was to show that Council were divided at least 50 : 50 as to the wisdom of going ahead in these circumstances; and it was agreed that the matter should be deferred for a further fortnight during which there should be a further examination of the arguments against action which had been put forward by the Supply Department (and which Ramaswami Mudaliar, while accepting them as a fair statement of the position as it was today, was not prepared without further investigation to accept as necessarily permanently valid); and which would enable us also to see where exactly we stood on the technical treaty side as regards the trade understanding which exists between South Africa and ourselves. I am much relieved myself that things have gone this way. I have every sympathy with the very natural feeling of my Indian colleagues. But considerations of Imperial solidarity quite apart, I do particularly want to make sure that we do not, in a moment of temper, land ourselves in a situation that may be very expensive for India on the longer view and that can do nothing positive to help forward the interests which we have most at heart.

21 August 1943

8. I mentioned the Bengal position and Herbert's recent letter[3] in my letter of the 16th August. I asked Maxwell for his advice on the matter of the Calcutta Corporation,[4] and I send you copy of his reply by this bag. It seems clear that in certain circumstances the Governor-General could take appropriate action. I will have a word with Herbert about that. Meanwhile I am glad to be able to report that his Cabinet decided at their meeting on the 12th August to introduce legislation to impose an agricultural income-tax; to enhance the existing sales tax, and also to press the cultivators to repay their debts of all forms. That is very satisfactory so far as it goes and on the strength of this undertaking Raisman will be making available a first instalment of 1½ crores of ways and means in September. It goes without saying that this undertaking must be followed up by resolute action, and I am letting Herbert know that I rely on him to do everything in his power to ensure that the undertaking is duly implemented without avoidable delay. He has also been in correspondence[5] with me about the filling of certain of his more important appointments. Blair, his Chief Secretary, is handing over on retirement (that has been approved

[3] No. 76.

[4] Namely, the extent of the Governor's powers to supersede the Corporation. A copy of Sir R. Maxwell's reply is on L/P&J/8/652.

[5] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43.

by you officially). Herbert wishes to put in Stevens who, from what I have seen of him, is a very good man as substantive Chief Secretary, when Blair's leave prior to retirement expires. That will not however be for some months yet, and in the interim he proposes to put Stevens in charge of the food position, and to appoint his present Secretary, Williams, to be acting Chief Secretary. He urges however that Stevens should not suffer financially by that, and that he should be paid as if he were Chief Secretary. I think these arrangements are satisfactory, and I have told him that I will readily support to you the proposal for an extra post paid at the Chief Secretary's rate. I think that the very pointed representations which I have had to make to Herbert recently are beginning to produce some effect. But my lack of real confidence in him is not diminished, though you may think that these new signs of grace may strengthen the case for marking time a little longer.

9. I mentioned in my last letter the visit of His Highness of Nepal, and I send you by this bag a note[6] of the conversations that took place between us.

10. Thank you very much for your letter of the 5th August.[7] I am most grateful to you for your kind message about my speech, and also for the steps you have taken to distribute it at home. I am sorry that there were these misunderstandings about publicity for it.[8] We can do a certain amount by tightening up the organisation to protect the future in that regard, and I will of course have a word to Joyce about it when I see him, as I look forward to doing next month. But I think the lesson has probably been a useful one for us both, for the incident has brought out very clearly the importance of organising comment of a *favourable* character at home when the chance occurs. We may be perfectly certain that the Left Wing papers will always be ready with critical comment—inspired of course very often direct from India by people like Shiva Rao, the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, or at the London end by Krishna Menon and his friends.

11. You have been most kind about food and I am very grateful for your help. I was a shade uneasy to see (though perhaps I am reading too much into it) from a telegram[9] to the Minister of State that even this Iraq barley is not too firm. But you have given us most valuable assistance, and in particular I am grateful to you for passing on my last message[10] to the Prime Minister in Canada. I am bound to take very seriously, as of course you do yourself, Auchinleck's apprehensions of the possible effect on our coming campaign of the serious food shortage—that of course quite apart from any question of an additional strain that might be placed upon us in respect of internal security by grievous shortage. You may be sure that we will do all that we can not only to produce but also to extract food in this country: and I am informing Governors in my personal correspondence with them that they must deal

drastically and firmly with obstruction, even if at the Ministerial level in the Ministerial Provinces.

12. I shall look forward to the further telegram you mention about inflation, and I am passing on to Raisman what you say about a prize loan. I have already asked him to consider the point you put about diamonds, but have not yet had his advice.

13. Like yourself I hope that from these deliberations in Canada and America[11] something will emerge about the Supreme Commander, &c. I quite agree with you as to the very helpful way in which Auchinleck has behaved. I think it does him the more credit as in the initial stages there were signs, as you know, that he was by no means altogether happy or reconciled. But he has played up very well indeed and that is a very good and encouraging omen for the future.

[Para. 14, on future plans for Sir J. Raisman, Sir R. Maxwell, Sir H. Twynam and Mr Pilditch, omitted.]

15. I have been working on a draft (though it is terribly difficult to get down to the detail of one with the constant pressure of discussions and interviews, and the major papers that one has to deal with) on this business of social progress, and hope to get something off to you in the next few days. What I have already sent you from here will I trust give you a good deal of material. The fact is that Bevin and Cripps are on nothing like as good ground for pressing this sort of thing as they would be, first, if they were going to pay; secondly, if Parliament had not to so large an extent transferred control of the bulk of the subjects in issue. You may be pretty sure that no Government of India is going to stand very much instruction from home on how to spend its own money; and anyone with the slightest appreciation of the background, religious, social and economic in this country, would realise the extreme difficulty involved in giving effect to some of the propositions so lightheartedly put forward by Cripps and his band of young theorists. You may take it as quite positive that the political effect of social pressure of this nature will be negative from the point of view of advantage to us, and indeed that pressure beyond a certain point would certainly be misunderstood and do us harm.

[Para. 16, on the Missionaries' appeal, omitted.]

17. I do hope that you have managed to get away for your leave—I can imagine how much you must need it. I trust you will have had good weather and will come back refreshed.

All luck!

6 MSS. EUR. F. 125/138. 7 No. 72. 8 See Nos. 77, 81 and 84.
9 Asking Middle East Supply Centre to surrender 15,000 tons of its allocation of barley monthly from 1 November 1943 until the 100,000 tons for India had been completed. L/E/8/3316.
10 No. 78. 11 See No. 72, note 3.

88

Mr Jinnah to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY, *23 August 1943*

Your Excellency,

I beg to inform you that I have been receiving information concerning the various developments that have been taking place in Kashmir for the last few months from very reliable sources and my recent information leads me to believe that the Kashmir situation is very grave. I am not advisably sending you the details because I am sure that you have already more information and perhaps more reliable than I possess. The purpose of writing this letter to you is to earnestly request your attention to this matter without further delay. If you desire I can send you the summary of various developments that have taken place culminating into [in] the resignation of Sir Maharaj Singh, the late Premier of Kashmir, and since his departure from Kashmir. I hope it will receive your immediate consideration and result in consequent necessary action in the matter, which will do justice to the Mussalmans, who are going through an ordeal of tremendous hardships, sufferings and injustice which is meted out to them by the State authorities and its administration.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

89

Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/78

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE GOVERNOR'S REPORT NO. 16, DATED THE 24TH AUGUST 1943

2. All four bye-elections for the vacant Muslim seats went in favour of the Muslim League. Three of these were expected, but one, Sudhum in Mardan District, used to be one of the strongholds of Congress and the Red Shirts, and the Muslim League success in that constituency is significant. It would not, I think, have been possible had not the ground been prepared by the propaganda which we have been doing almost since the war started, most of it on Islamic lines. The result has been that the Yusufzai Mullahs of Mardan, who used to be professionally anti-Government, became first anti-Russian and

anti-German, then anti-Japanese, and so by natural sequence anti-Hindu and anti-Congress. It is satisfactory to note that the Muslim League successes in these bye-elections are generally accepted as being a victory for the British Government over the subversive elements in the country. Although all went off quietly, we had to post unusually large numbers of police at the polling booths as a precaution. I am told that the Muslim League organisation for the polling was not really good, and this makes the victory all the more significant. They delighted the people of Peshawar City by dressing up a rather aged stork in a *dhoti*, with big spectacles on its beak, and leading it through the City in a procession with a ticket marked "Mahatma Gandhi". I am told it was a cruelly true caricature. The stork died the following day of exhaustion!

90

Sir J. Herbert (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *28 August 1943*

Dear Linlithgow,
You will have learnt from my telegram of yesterday[1] that I shall shortly be laid up for a few days for an operation; and I feel that before that I should, as promised in my fortnightly report of the 23rd August,[2] address you further on the food situation.

2. Firstly, I think we can claim to have made good progress with our plans and organisation. I have tackled my Ministers individually and in Cabinet and I feel that they have come to appreciate their responsibility. This is shown by their acceptance of a number of important measures which I urged them to consider. These include the registration of all persons receiving relief in Calcutta and their removal to centres outside the city, medical supervision and, in particular, closer control of all relief centres. It is intended to use for relief certain camps originally prepared for air-raid refugees from Calcutta. These could be used adequately to accommodate beggars who have come in from the *mofussil* and for their detention there until we are assured that the conditions in their villages warrant their being sent back. As these camps are *kutcha* bamboo structures, they can later be destroyed to prevent infection and rebuilt for their original purpose.

[1] Informing Lord Linlithgow that he had decided to undergo an operation for the removal of his appendix on 31 August or 1 September. His doctors had advised him that he should be able to deal with urgent business after four days. MSS. EUR. F. 125/43.

[2] *Ibid.*

3. My Ministers are now at one with me in the view that relief measures are primarily a Government responsibility. There is no objection to assistance to Government from voluntary organisations provided these organisations are adequately supervised and controlled by Government. Once we have got relief measures co-ordinated and in operation, I hope that we can get out some effective propaganda to counteract the present unhelpful tales of horror in the Press which manifests itself largely in photographs which might have been taken in Calcutta any time during the last 10 years.

4. In the *mofussil* conditions are, I am advised, not as bad as would appear from the Press. A number of District Magistrates recently came to Calcutta to confer on the subject of relief and control of crops; and I gathered from them that far more has been done in the way of distribution of relief than has been advertised. I only hope that it will be possible to publish more about relief and less about "horrors". What I heard from District Magistrates is certainly borne out by my recent visits to Dacca and Chittagong, where I found that the local officers had the situation adequately organised and well in hand. There are, of course, some distant villages to which supplies cannot be sent during present climatic conditions, whence refugees have found their way to the relief centres, leading to a concentration in certain places of many hundreds of starving persons; but with the end of the monsoon this should cease.

5. In this matter of food supplies, and other respects, Nazimuddin has been definitely weak in controlling his colleagues and imposing co-ordination on them. I have spoken and written to him very earnestly on this subject, and I feel that there is a definite change for the better. Indeed, I think that the other Ministers will themselves insist on the Chief Minister discharging the peculiar responsibilities of his position.

6. By the time you receive this, our plans for getting control of the *aus* crop will already be in operation. But I would like to repeat that the value of the *aus* crop (as compared with the winter *aman* crop) is being greatly exaggerated. *Aus* will help to tide over our difficulties, it cannot solve them. Further, while I do not wish to appear pessimistic, I must give warning that control of the *aman* crop may not end our difficulties. I do not wish to revive controversy, but I feel that I should briefly set out—for the last time, I hope—what I consider to be at the root of our food troubles.

7. First, and above all, politics are at the root of the difficulty. The Huq Ministry made no real effort as a Ministry to tackle food. The most that can be said is that they allowed the officials to try to carry on, although it cannot be said that they gave them effective support. The present Ministry is keen enough, but practically the entire Press is against them, will give them no credit for what they do and spreads despondency and panic with a view to

discrediting the Ministry and Government (including the Central Government). I fear that this has led to the devotion of much official energy which would be better expended on administration to recriminations and unedifying endeavours to shift the blame on to other shoulders. I must admit that my Ministers have fallen for this and are only now beginning to see that what is needed is not self-excuse but self-help. But the fact remains that, whatever the improvement in the food position, politicians and the Press are out to belittle and undermine it.

8. The other basic trouble is the splitting up of the north-eastern rice growing area by Provincial barriers with resultant interruption of the normal trade routes. I feel I cannot do better than send you a copy of our official letter of the 9th April last[3] which I consider to be an admirable exposition of the point of view which we have consistently held, and still hold, in Bengal. We shall naturally work loyally under the recently reimposed Provincial barriers; and in point of fact the existence of those barriers, if judiciously raised and lowered, is not inconsistent with the revival of normal trade routes, e.g. Purnea to Darjeeling, Burdwan to Jheria and Assam to Mymensingh. (You will remember that when we discussed the question in Delhi in March last we were both agreed that Sleeman[4] is still right as regards the indispensability of operating normal trade channels.)

9. To put it very briefly, I cannot foresee a time when Bengal will be wholly rid of its rice difficulties so long as N. E. India is not treated as a single unit for purposes of rice-supplies and so long as the normal trade channels of supply have not been fully restored.

10. Would you please regard this letter as replacing my usual fortnightly report for the second half of August, as I shall still be laid up when that is

[3] Not printed. This letter warned the Government of India of the Bengal Government's opinion that the treating of Assam, Bengal, Bihar and Orissa as separate units for the procurement of, and trade in, rice and paddy was fast leading to disaster. While the Bengal Government did not challenge the merits of the Central Government's wheat policy since wheat had to be moved long distances by rail, obstructions to the movement of rice and paddy led to the interruption of the multifarious channels through which this trade normally flowed; the effect on the supply of seed was especially harmful. The letter stressed that an essential feature of the Bengal Government's proposal to ration the city and industrial area of Calcutta was that 'the whole foodgrain supply for this area must be brought in under Government purchase or under the physical control of Government'. It estimated that requirements for this purpose would amount to not less than ten to eleven lakhs of maunds monthly, of which rice would account for not less than seven to eight lakhs of maunds. The normal channels whereby Calcutta obtained its food supplies were now closed. If therefore the Provincial embargoes were maintained, it would become the direct responsibility of the Central Government to supplement, from other Provinces, such flow of rice supplies to Calcutta as the Bengal Government might be able to organise within an artificially isolated Bengal. *Ibid.*

[4] Maj.-Gen. Sir W. H. Sleeman, *Rambles and Recollections of an Indian Official*, vol. I (London, Constable and Co., 1893), pp. 186–96.

normally due? Williams will send Laithwaite our Home Department report for that period when it is ready.

Yours sincerely,
J. A. HERBERT

91

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, BOMBAY, *28 August 1943*

The Federal Court are hard at it on a variety of applications in connection with these *Habeas Corpus* cases.[1] I have been watching their proceedings as reported in the press with a great deal of interest, partly because we now for the first time have Spens as the presiding Judge; partly because of the relevance of the impression that those discussions may produce to our decision about the extension of the jurisdiction of the Court. I cannot say that so far I have been very greatly impressed. I am not in a position to speak about the purely legal side, but as a layman I get the impression that far more talking has been done by the two Puisne Judges—Varadachariar and Zafrulla—than by all the various advocates put together; while the amount of judicial humour whether from Zafrulla or Varadachariar is well above the best days of Mr. Justice Darling. The Chief Justice has intervened only once or twice, and then on clearly relevant and important points. He is obviously holding his fire, but so much turns on the Federal Court producing a greater impression of dignity, objectivity, and restraint than in the past that I could wish his colleagues had been a little more cautious so far.

[Para. 2, on a visit to India by a party of American Senators, omitted.]

3. I mentioned in my last letter[2] that I hoped to have a longer conversation with His Highness of Mysore during my stay in his State. I had a very satisfactory talk with him, and I send you by this bag my record[3] of it. As I have said in that record I think that he is very good quality and of high intelligence although he is hampered by this hypertrophy (a condition that I dare say would admit of being treated medically if His Highness saw no objection for religious or other reasons to taking a treatment), and he is by nature a somewhat shy and reticent person. But I am sure that there is good material in him, and it would be a great pity if we are not able to turn it to some advantage for the Princely Order and for the good of India as a whole, for the position he holds, his own high character and that of his predecessor, and his general intelligence, are all very substantial assets that ought not to be allowed to go to waste

30 August 1943

4. I hope that you have enjoyed your leave from which you will I suppose have returned by the time this letter reaches London. I am very near the end of my extremely strenuous tour to the south and to Bombay. I had a pleasant couple of days in Travancore without engagements, and was more than grateful for that temporary relief. But both at Poona and here at Bombay I have been exceedingly busy and have seen a large number of people, and had to do any amount of inspections.

5. The general impression I get of feeling in Bombay is most encouraging. There is of course in the political field no progress and no hope that I can see of any. The ordinary population does not seem to be greatly disturbed by that, and their general attitude towards the war and war effort is all that could be desired. Colville has got hold of his work thoroughly and makes an excellent impression.

6. I have done a good deal of inspection of troops, &c., and at Poona I thought it a good thing to say a word to a mixed parade which I inspected there, and to touch incidentally on what I am certain is likely to become a question of importance in the near future, viz. the possibility that we may have to require substantial numbers of troops to remain in this country or further ease [east?] for the Far Eastern campaign at a time when demobilisation may be beginning at home. I send you a copy[4] of my remarks which I have had released to the press generally.

7. I am much distressed at this latest news about Jack Herbert's health. It is obvious that he is a good deal worse than any of us had imagined, and Government House, Calcutta, continues to add to its lamentable reputation (you will remember that not only did poor Brabourne collapse there after one of these internal operations, but that his acting successor, Reid, then had a serious appendix, and now Jack Herbert produces an appendix complicated by a duodenal ulcer). The first news I had from him suggested that he might be all right in about a week's time,[5] and on that assumption, and taking into account the very considerable additional strain which Herbert would have found himself under as the result of his illness, I said to you[6] that I doubted

[1] These applications had been made on the ground that Ordinance XIV of 1943 was invalid. The Ordinance itself had been promulgated to validate detention orders made under Defence of India Rule 26 following the Federal Court declaration of the previous April that this Rule was *ultra vires*. (See Vol. III, No. 678, note 2.) The Federal Court on this occasion held the relevant section of Ordinance XIV to be valid and therefore dismissed applications for release from detenus in the United Provinces, Punjab and Madras. However it upheld (Sir W. Spens dissenting) the decision of the Calcutta High Court releasing nine detenus (see No. 12, note 1) since the correct administrative procedure for their detention had not been followed.

[2] No. 87. [3] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138. [4] Not printed. [5] See No. 90, note 1.

[6] In tel. 344–S.C. of 29 August.

if we could go ahead with replacing him at this stage. But it is a very different business when in present circumstances in Bengal the Governor has without prejudice to future operations or treatment to abandon all work for "at least a month", and I do not feel that we shall be justified in carrying the responsibility involved in leaving that most difficult Province at this critical juncture without a good man in charge. Nor do I feel at all disposed, given my own judgment of Herbert's performance and the way in which events have now turned out as regards his health, to suggest that it is so important to keep him that we ought to take the risks involved in holding on to him after he has had a couple of months of convalescence for the balance of a term which is due to end in any event in December 1944. My own clear view, therefore, though the decision is of course a matter for you, is that we should make arrangements for his permanent replacement and get the new man in as soon as possible, and that in the intermediate period we should put in Rutherford to take control. This is bound to be a disappointment to Herbert. But I am not at all sure that from his point of view as well as that of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State, it may not prove a blessing in disguise, for the change would fall to be made, on the time-table I have just been suggesting, before he and Bengal had been subjected to the test of a campaign and before any further developments had taken place that might make you and either myself or my successor feel that we had no option but to put someone in to relieve him.

[Para. 8, on the filling of posts in the Bengal Government, and the Bengal sugar situation, omitted.]

9. I would like to draw your attention to the letter which I am sending by the bag, from the Secretary to the Governor of the Central Provinces, dated the 24th August,[7] commenting on an article contributed to the *New Statesman* by Edward Thompson. I am quite prepared to accept that Edward Thompson is sincerely convinced of the validity of the various arguments he puts forward from time to time, though I will not conceal from you that there have been occasions when I have had the greatest difficulty in convincing myself that that was the case! But he is entirely one-sided; determined to ignore the existence of the Muslims; the existence of a communal problem; the stresses that have to be carried by any government that is going to govern in this country; and as I have found myself he is quite capable, I dare say innocently, of misrepresenting what has taken place (it will be on record I think in the India Office that Gandhi himself wrote to me[8] about a statement made to him by Edward Thompson for which there was no shadow of foundation and arising out of a conversation between Thompson and myself). The present article is characteristically one-sided and my sympathies are with the local Government.

10. Brendan Bracken's statement[9] that political advance in India was in cold storage for the present has attracted a good deal of attention here and I dare

say will attract a good deal more. The fact that he is a Minister of the Crown; that he is well known to be one of Winston's closest collaborators, and that the statement was made in reply to enquiries from the American press, in America, and with Winston next door, all add to its importance. I cannot help feeling some doubt about the wisdom of statements of that order of importance being put out by anyone apart from the Prime Minister, or (in this case) the Secretary of State for India; though for myself I think it is a very good thing that Bracken should have said what he did, for it does in effect faithfully represent the position to which we have been driven by the complete and unqualified refusal of any of the Indian political parties to co-operate with our endeavours to bring about some form of political progress. Rajagopalachari (whose one anxiety nowadays is to keep himself and Congress in the news by seizing any opportunity to make a statement or to misinterpret statements of others) has been on to Bracken's remarks at once.[10] But I attach no particular importance to what he says and I think that he has lost a certain amount of ground of late as a result of saying more than he need.

11. I touched in my letter of last week[11] on the discussions in Council about the South African position. The examination of the practical effects of retaliation is still I understand proceeding. Meanwhile I am amused to read in this week's *Roy's Weekly* (in an article, commenting on the Quebec discussions, which proceeds on the assumption that India must have been one of the major issues before those concerned), that "the mere decision to fight the Japanese

[7] Drawing attention to a passage in Dr Thompson's article in which he had 'said that an Indian village—obviously Chimur—"has had a large proportion of its inhabitants sentenced to anything from flogging up to death".' Sir H. Twynam wished to point out that only 48 persons out of more than 5,000 villagers had been convicted in the two Chimur cases; that Dr Thompson had omitted to mention the brutal murders of two policemen and two magistrates; and that the resemblance drawn between the silence of the Chimur villagers and the inhabitants of Czech or Polish villages holding back from giving evidence which might send their neighbours to the gallows, was not very apparent since 'murder is still murder even if the victims are Government servants trying to do their duty'. MSS. EUR. F. 125/64.

[8] In his letter of 24 October 1939, Mr Gandhi informed Lord Linlithgow that Dr Thompson had reported the Viceroy as having said in an interview that he considered Mr Gandhi had been guilty of discourtesy in his comment on the *Statement issued by the Governor-General of India on 17 October, 1939* (Cmd. 6121). In his reply of 26 October, Lord Linlithgow said he did not consider Mr Gandhi's statement discourteous, nor did he recall saying anything to Dr Thompson which might have given that impression. MSS. EUR. F. 125/121.

[9] At a press conference in New York on 27 August, Mr Bracken said the Indian political issue had been put in cold storage for the duration of the War but that 'Britain stands solemnly pledged to India, and these pledges will be fulfilled in every respect'. He hoped Indians would achieve unity amongst themselves.

[10] In an interview with the *United Press* on 29 August, Mr Rajagopalachari said Indian opinion would treat Mr Bracken's statement as further evidence of British bad faith. The policy of putting controversy in cold storage until after the war meant, he believed, that India would waste time in political controversy which other nations would use for reconstruction.

[11] No. 87, para. 7.

and get back Burma is not enough, and will not rouse the enthusiasm of the people of India if there is not an explicit undertaking that she would be restored to India". The article proceeds that "it is really in the interests of Ceylon that Ceylon should realign itself with India in the New Asia", and that "there is need for a declaration on the part of Messrs. Roosevelt and Churchill that on the termination of the War Ceylon also would become a part of India". That is the type of idea that is in a good many people's minds, and I confess that I find the lack of practical or political realism which it displays discouraging in a substantial degree. However, it would be a mistake to take anything of this type too seriously.

[Para. 12, on Sir H. Dow's relations with his ministry on the subjects of the Sind Revenue Tribunal and the Bombay-Sind Public Service Commission, omitted.]

92

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *30 August 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 356–S.C. My private and personal telegram of 30th August, No. 353–S.C.[1] Herbert. It is clear from his Secretary's telegram[2] that Herbert will not be able to do any work "for at least one month from now", and given the serious nature of the complaints from which unhappily he seems to be suffering it would not surprise me if he is out of action for a couple of months at any rate. Nor is Bengal in the near future likely to be a good charge for a convalescent Governor.

2. Given present extremely difficult situation in Bengal I am clear myself that we cannot face responsibility involved in leaving the Province without an effective Governor even for a month, still less for two months. Apart from that, as you know, I have not myself been satisfied with Herbert's performance, and I do not think that he carries the guns or has the intelligence to deal with that difficult Province, particularly now that we are moving into a campaigning position. As I said in my telegram of 29th August, No. 344–S.C.,[3] I should for all that have been prepared to leave things as they were and take a further chance had Herbert's present illness merely been a matter of his being out of action for a week or so. But it is evident now that something much more serious is involved and in those circumstances my definite recommendation to you would be that he should be relieved on grounds of health.

3. To act pending appointment of a successor from home I still think that the best man to put in would be Rutherford. As indicated in my telegram of 29th August, my mind leans very much to Mudie as a temporary replacement for Rutherford in Bihar for the reasons therein given. But I would like to have a word with Hallett about this and possibly also with Maxwell, and will do so after my return to Delhi tomorrow evening.

4. But the really important thing if you accept my view about the permanent replacement of Herbert is that we should get a thoroughly good man from home. It needed an Anderson to clear up the mess left by Stanley Jackson's administration. We are not much better off now. There is a weak Civil Service; Indianisation has further weakened a cadre not too good in any circumstances; the Ministry is not a strong one; the food position is critical; and a pretty firm hand and much experience will be called for. One name that occurs to me is Dudley. But I do not know whether he still remains reluctant to come back to public life. Otherwise I should have thought that he probably had the broad general experience and the habit of mind that might make him a very good Governor. You however are best able to judge. But I would most earnestly beg that we should not again go too trustingly to the Whips Room or put in a man who is not going to be able to carry what will unquestionably be a very heavy burden.

5. I have of course said nothing to Herbert about my recommendation to you and will say nothing until I know your reaction. But if, as I trust, you are disposed to agree with me, I would then put it to him that you and I, with the greatest regret, did not feel that we could in present circumstances leave Bengal without a Governor actively carrying on or take the chance involved in postponing a decision until a later stage in his illness and convalescence; and that in these circumstances we felt we had no option but to invite him on grounds of health to allow us to make arrangements for his permanent replacement, while *ad interim* since the Province in its present condition could not be left for more than a week at the outside without a Governor in active control, we proposed to put in Rutherford to act.

6. I shall have to examine what the technical position is of a Governor on sick leave in this country, but we can get round any technical difficulties that may arise.

[1] Not traced in India Office Records. [2] Not printed. [3] MSS. EUR. F. 125/25.

93

Memorandum by Government of India, Food Department[1]

MSS. EUR. F. 125/138

undated[2]

THE BENGAL FOOD SITUATION

The Bengal Government recently informed[3] the Government of India officially that in view of the inadequate quota allotted to them under the revised Basic Plan, they must disown all responsibility for the deterioration of the position in Bengal. The Food Department replied[4] asking certain questions of the Bengal Government designed to remind that Government of the measures which had, in the past, been continuously urged on all Governments and which should now be taken without delay. These measures, so far as the Bengal Government were concerned, were, apart from the rationing of Calcutta and other towns, as follows:—

(*a*) To estimate correctly the total *Aus* crop District by District.
(*b*) To create efficient purchasing machinery to acquire the maximum proportion of the crop on behalf of the Government.
(*c*) To canalise the available supplies into the hands of the Government purchasing agents and prevent competitive activities of speculators or hoarders.
(*d*) To induce traders and cultivators to sell, if necessary by requisitioning.
(*e*) To detect hoarding, penalise profiteering and acquire compulsorily available stocks over a reasonable maximum holding.
(*f*) To secure the co-operation of the railways in preventing bookings on private account from surplus districts to deficit districts by rail, with a view to directing supplies and movements into the hands of the official agency.
(*g*) To secure the distribution of surpluses in such a manner and at such a price that all persons, whatever their means, are able to obtain their share.

The Government of Bengal were warned that, if they failed to take adequate steps to secure the objects enumerated in (*a*) to (*g*) above, the Government of India would be compelled to consider what measures they should take to ensure that the domestic resources of Bengal are made use of in the most efficient manner.

2. The administrative food problem of Bengal today, as of every other deficit area in India, lies in the procurement of all domestic surpluses of foodgrains and the equitable and efficient distribution of those surpluses, as well as of foodgrains imported from other parts of India. In Bengal the problem is

accentuated by the presence of Calcutta itself, with its population of nearly four million and over half the war industries of India. The situation in Calcutta and the surrounding districts is now very serious and opinion even in Bengal itself is that, unless immediate steps are taken, the position will, early in October, become still more grave. The autumn paddy crop is already coming on to the market in Bengal. Reduced, therefore, to terms of action immediately required, the task before the Bengal Government is, if disaster is to be avoided, to have ready for operation before the end of September all arrangements for (*i*) the food rationing of Calcutta, (*ii*) the setting up of an effective purchasing organisation throughout Bengal, and (*iii*) a complete reorganisation of the existing transport system.

3. For this purpose, an immediate reorganisation of the Bengal Government's food administration is required. It is true that certain preliminary steps have been taken, both towards the setting up of a purchasing organisation and for distribution of supplies in the Bengal districts and in Calcutta, but from information available to the Government of India, progress is far too slow and the measures so far taken far from adequate.

Instances are briefly as follows:—

(*a*) The much advertised "anti-hoarding" drive in the Bengal districts and in Calcutta has achieved very little that is positive. The Bengal Government themselves do not claim that it was more than a "food census", disclosing stocks in the districts amounting to rather more than 300,000 tons. The Bengal Government emphasises that this is "stock" and is in no sense "surplus", except to a negligible extent. In Calcutta itself practically no stocks were disclosed which could be classified as "hoards" or were held in contravention of the Foodgrains Control Order.

(*b*) Since the Rationing Adviser[5] to the Government of India left Calcutta 3 weeks ago, no progress appears to have been made in the preparation of the over-all rationing scheme for Calcutta on the lines advised by him.

(*c*) The procurement of the annual rice production of Bengal crop of between 8 and 9 million tons has since May been in the hands of one agent only, viz. Messrs. Ispahani.

(*d*) The Bengal Government have not yet appointed a Transport Officer and all the essential operations connected with the reception and distribution of foodgrains in Calcutta are handled by the Government of India's Deputy R.F.C. It was never intended that the R.F.C. and his

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 7 September 1943 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

[2] This memorandum was prepared for consideration by the Viceroy's Council on 1 September; see Nos. 97, para. 2 and 100, para. 2.

[3 and 4] This correspondence is not printed.

[5] Mr W. H. Kirby.

officers should perform the executive functions properly belonging [to] Provincial Governments. A proper Bengal transport reorganisation both inside and outside the Province has long been pressed on the Government.

(*e*) There is a tendency on the part of the Bengal Government to look on the distribution centres for the relief of a comparatively few of the destitute and poorer classes of the population, opened in Calcutta and the districts, as the limit of all possible distribution and rationing measures.

(*f*) The Bengal Government have never explained in a satisfactory manner their method of distribution of supplies imported from outside; the fact that part of this grain goes straight from "controlled grain shops" and "approved markets" into the black-markets is an open scandal.

(*g*) The arrangements for the distribution of wheat products and sugar are far from satisfactory. So is their administration of salt. Moreover, their price policy as regards both wheat products and salt requires minute investigation.

4. Mr. H. S. E. Stevens has recently been appointed Special Food Commissioner for Bengal. It is evident that insufficiency of staff and a hampering direction and control are greatly limiting the usefulness of his functions and that as yet the Bengal Government has grasped neither the magnitude nor the urgency of their task.

5. Government of India consider that the following administrative reorganisation is required to remedy the defects indicated in paragraphs 1 and 2 above:—

(*a*) The Civil Supplies Department of Bengal must be reorganised and strengthened with a very great increase in its officer establishment. It must be realised that what Bengal needs is the creation of the best piece of administrative machinery on business lines that can be created in a short time. The following organisation under Mr. Stevens as Special Food Commissioner is recommended, subject to the views of His Excellency the Governor:—

Seven main Branches, of which one (No. 4) may be a purely temporary Branch, under a sufficiency of experienced and energetic officers—

(1) Rationing (Calcutta and other urban areas).
(2) Supply, procurement and policy.
(3) Transport.
(4) Emergency relief of distress and destitution.
(5) Commodities (wheat, wheat products, salt, sugar, &c.).
(6) Publicity and propaganda.
(7) Legal and enforcement.

Of these, broadly speaking, only No. 2 at present exists.

(*b*) In order to expedite arrangements for the rationing of Calcutta as a matter of immediate urgency, Mr. Kirby should be authorised to proceed to Calcutta as soon as the last of his lectures in Bombay is over, i.e. at the end of the next week. He should be instructed to prepare, in association with Mr. Hartley, the newly appointed Director of Rationing, and at least 4 or 5 other senior officers, within 14 days, a comprehensive plan of urban food rationing for Calcutta, ready to be put into operation from the 1st of October. Into this scheme will have to be worked the existing organisation of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce which caters for over a million industrial workers and their dependants. Probably the schemes of other industrial organisations will have to be brought in. The whole scheme will constitute a piece of intricate and difficult planning, so as to produce a uniform over-all scheme taking advantage wherever possible of existing organisations. It may well be that the Managers of the industrial schemes will have to be brought into the Department of Supply.

(*c*) The Government of Bengal should appoint at least two big Firms experienced in the grain trade, for purchasing operations on behalf of the Provincial Government throughout Bengal, in addition to Messrs. Ispahani.

6. Although it is not properly the function of the Food Department to make such suggestions, it might be suggested for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor that the Civil Supplies portfolio should be transferred to the Chief Minister or, alternatively (but less satisfactorily), an arrangement whereby under Section 59 (4) of the Government of India Act, Mr. Stevens became directly subject to the control and direction of His Excellency the Governor.

A further alternative would be the authorisation of the Special Food Commissioner under Section 124 (1) of the Government of India Act to perform his functions under the direction of the Central Government.

Yet another alternative which deserves consideration is the immediate creation of 3 or 4 extra portfolios, all concerned with the food supply arrangements in Bengal. Such portfolios might cover rationing, transport, procurement, specific relief. These portfolios should be held by well-known and trusted persons preferably businessmen. The effect would be the creation, as it were, of the Board of Directors to supervise the control of food supply arrangements in Bengal.

If any of these measures are taken, the possibility of the resignation of the Ministry and the introduction of a Section 93 administration must be faced. It is possible that the Ministry and many others in Bengal might welcome such a development. In that case the Governor would be well advised to set up a

Council of 4 or 5 representative men, some with business experience, on the lines of the "Board of Directors" suggested immediately above, to advise him specially in the direction and control of food supply arrangements in Bengal.

94

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/6/108a: ff 100–5

1 September 1943

F.M. Ld Wavell

The attached was drafted early this year with a view to submission to the Cabinet, but held over owing to Gandhi's fast & Executive resignations. But you may care to read and consider it at your leisure and we can discuss it anon.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 94

Uncirculated Draft by Mr Amery

War Cabinet

THE INDIAN POLITICAL SITUATION

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

1. The Present Deadlock.

Reviewing the Indian political situation a year ago (W.P. (42) 42)[1] I expressed the conviction, shared by the Viceroy, that there was, for the time being, no prospect of any initiative on our part, however generous, "touching the heart" of India and bringing about general agreement or increasing the intensity of India's war effort. I consequently urged that we should be content to make the most of the recently expanded and largely Indianized Executive by the consideration and respect shown to it in all matters of inter-Imperial policy, and, for the rest, stand by the far reaching declaration of long term policy issued in August 1940.[2]

Sir Stafford Cripps' mission undoubtedly did much to prove the sincerity of our professions with regard to Indian self-government. It failed for two main reasons. Firstly for the reason which I gave in last year's analysis of the situation, namely that none of the political parties, least of all Congress, were sufficiently interested in Indian freedom for its own sake to forgo their own particular aspirations for exclusive power, whether over India as a whole or over part of it. Secondly it failed because, coming at the moment when it did,

it was interpreted as a sign, not of generosity, but of weakness by those who, like Mr. Gandhi and the Hindu industrialists behind him, thought that we were offering a "post-dated cheque on a crashing bank", and who had no desire to support unpopular war measures or to find themselves committed to the losing side when the Japanese marched in.

It was this same conviction that we were ready to yield almost anything in face of imminent Japanese invasion, as well as the determination to defeat, once for all, the obnoxious 1940 conception of an Indian constitution based on agreement, and not on Congress' totalitarian control, that inspired the insolent demand that the British Government should clear out of India forthwith,[3] and the planning of a general campaign of civil disobedience—or "rebellion," to use Mr. Gandhi's own word. Concentrated upon sabotage of India's vital communications, and timed to coincide with the impending invasion, this campaign was intended to crown Gandhi's life work by bringing the Government of India to its knees and securing the unconditional transfer of power into the hands of the Congress Working Committee.

Meanwhile the Government of India had effectively strengthened its hands by a further measure of expansion. The generosity and boldness of Sir Stafford Cripps' offer, however little effect it may have produced on party leaders thinking only of power for themselves, undoubtedly affected *moderate* Indian opinion generally and played its part in inducing sufficient influential public men of character and ability to join the enlarged Executive and to predispose the general public to support them. When the moment of trial came, on August 8th last, an Executive Council, at which only one unofficial European was present, decided unanimously to nip the Congress rebellion in the bud by the arrest of Gandhi and the Congress leaders.[4] Their courage met its reward in the loyal support everywhere of the civil authorities and of the police, in the self-governing Provinces as well as in those directly controlled by their Governors, and in the support, or at any rate abstention from making trouble, of the general population. The Congress rebellion went off at half-cock. Excitable Hindu students, local Congress agitators, mobs led by the elements of violence always latent in Indian society, and a sprinkling of real fifth columnists, were enough to create a troubled situation for many weeks, and one which continues to give cause for watchfulness. But they certainly failed either seriously to impede India's war effort or to shake the authority of the Government.

The decision of the Indian Members of the Viceroy's Executive to meet the Congress challenge halfway and face the consequences firmly both in the country and in the Legislature is, perhaps, the most important step in India's constitutional progress since the beginning of the period of the reforms. For it showed that Indians are, under appropriate conditions, capable of facing the

[1] Vol. I, No. 43. [2] Vol. I, Appendix I. [3] Vol. II, No. 470. [4] Vol. II, No. 467.

responsibility of governing. To give due recognition to that fact in all our relations with an Indian Government which has so signally justified itself is far more important than endeavouring to bring together mutually irreconcilable party leaders.

We have declared that the door still stands open for implementing the proposals of last March if the party leaders, even apart from Congress, can agree to come together. But all the efforts in that direction of Mr. Rajagopalachari, Sir Tej Sapru and others, have only resulted in showing the differences as unbridged as ever. It is something that the need for agreement has been recognised. But so long as it is concerned, not with the serious working out of an agreed constitution, but with some makeshift compromise for the sake of immediate power, the failure to secure agreement need not be regretted. The kind of Executive that could emerge from such a compromise would not be likely to constitute as efficient or as independent a working team as the present Executive. Nor, in my opinion at least, would it be as likely to pave the way towards a workable constitutional solution.

2. Policy for the Future.

In considering our policy for the future, both during and after the war, the first thing is to be clear in our own minds as to the object we have in view. That object, I suggest, is that India should remain united, *at any rate for the most essential common purposes*, under a stable and generally accepted system of government and, as such, retain her position as an equal partner in the British Commonwealth and under the common Crown which is the symbol of that partnership. These three conditions are, both from India's point of view and from our own, closely interrelated. An India divided by internal conflict, whether arising from a break up into quarreling units, or from a constitution resented by powerful minorities, would be entirely incapable of its own defence and a standing invitation to external aggression. Even a united and stable India will not, for many years to come, have the industrial or financial resources to sustain unaided the burden of her defence against serious aggression. On the other hand, from our point of view, a weak and divided India, whether within or without the Empire, would be as constant a menace to our peace as a strong India within the Empire would be the mainstay of our system of co-operative defence in the whole of the territories of the Empire which lie in a vast semicircle round the Indian Ocean.

What, then, are the conditions under which that object can be attained? One thing is certain. It cannot be attained by trying to keep the Government of India indefinitely in British hands or under the control of the Parliament of the United Kingdom. However much Indians may be divided they are all agreed in wishing to see India governed by Indians and not by us. The passion for self-government which we have fostered is in India transcended by the

race-conscious nationalism which has swept over the world everywhere, and which, if resisted, would, sooner or later, sweep British rule away in revolution and anarchy. That it has continued, and can continue for some time longer, is due to the fact that we are pledged so unequivocally and irrevocably to Indian self-government, and that Indian self-government, in so large a measure, is already an established fact.

The next condition—and it is here that I am particularly anxious to secure the assent of the War Cabinet—is that the desired result cannot be brought about under the federal provisions of the Act of 1935. For one thing neither the Moslems nor the States are likely to agree to as strongly centralized a federation. A looser union, probably with fewer central powers and with the residual powers reserved to the units, is, I believe, necessary if the complete splitting up of India is to be avoided. Much more important, however, from the point of view of all the minority elements, than the distribution of powers, is the actual nature of the constitution itself. The one type of government to which there is not the slightest hope of ever securing agreement in a United India is the British type in which the executive is directly and continuously dependent on a parliamentary majority. For under Indian conditions that means that the executive will be the puppet of a Congress, or at any rate Hindu, party caucus—of Gandhi or whoever may succeed him.

Only an executive representative of all communities and enjoying a tenure of office *independent* of parliamentary votes can hold India together. The idea is unfamiliar to us, but it is the basis of the whole American constitutional system. In a somewhat different form it is also the basis of the Swiss system. Such an executive might be elected by proportional representation by the central legislature, or it might be nominated by provincial and state governments. Continuity, as well as independence, could be secured by a reasonably long term of office and by the election or nomination of only a portion, say a third, at any one time. Some such system, however inconsistent with our parliamentary notions, is at any rate more likely to be accepted and to work under Indian conditions. What India needs is not a government acutely sensitive to the well balanced and reasonable opinion of an ancient Parliament and an educated homogeneous electorate, but a strong and independent government, responsive in the long run to broad changes of public opinion, but primarily embodying India's national aspiration to independence from external control and based on a recognition of her profound internal differences.

We are committed to the view that the actual future constitution of India is to be framed by Indians for themselves. That may well involve years of discussion, even after the war. *Meanwhile we cannot stand still.* Both Indian national sentiment and the pressure from Parliament here, not to speak of the United States, will force us to take action. That action, if it is to help the situation, must be in accordance with our own conception of the constitutional

future. If we are convinced, as I personally am, that a parliamentary executive is unsuited to India and that an executive independent of the legislature is essential to secure either unity or stability in a future Indian government then, clearly, we should abandon the idea of chasing after party politicians in order to tempt them to take part in the executive. *On the other hand we should do everything in our power to strengthen the authority in Indian eyes of the present Executive*, so that when agreement has been reached as to the future method of its appointment, the men and the responsible tradition will be there to secure an easy and safe transition from the old form of government to the new.

For that purpose there are two things that we can do. One is, while retaining the ultimate reserve power of Parliament, to make it increasingly clear to India and the world that India is, in fact and for all ordinary purposes, governed by her own government in her own interest and not by the Secretary of State and the Cabinet. The matter is one entirely within our own discretion. Obviously the War Cabinet must be prepared to support the Viceroy, even against his Council, on all questions in which he considers that the conduct of the war, the safety of India or her internal peace are directly involved. But we shall be well advised to rely on his judgment as to when such issues arise. On all other issues we should be prepared, as we long have been on fiscal questions, to accept the agreed view of the Government of India as final so far as we are concerned.

The other point that we must emphasise is that the Government of India is essentially an Indian Government. That does not mean that we should suddenly, and as a political gesture, Indianise the whole of the Executive or displace European members of the Civil Service or British officers in the Indian Army. *But it does mean the acceleration of the process of Indianization*. There is no essential reason, providing the Viceroy believes he can appoint men qualified for the purpose, why he should not fill further vacancies on his Executive, as and when they occur, in the Home or Finance Departments with Indian Members of Council—retaining, if he thought it necessary, a senior European official as personal adviser.

We must face the fact that the moment hostilities are over we shall be confronted by a general demand, in this country, possibly among the Allies, and certainly in India, for some immediate action in order to fulfil our pledges. It seems to me essential to make certain that when that demand comes we shall be in a position to point to the fact that India is already, to most intents and purposes, governed by Indians, though under provisional constitutional arrangements, and that any delay in fulfilment of the demand for a complete and *final self-governing constitution is India's own responsibility*. Delay there will certainly be, possibly for many years. Those years may give India time, not only to train up a body of experienced and responsible administrators, but also to become more aware of the problems involved in her external relationships

and more conscious of the disadvantages of severance from the British connexion. The best prospect, indeed, of Indians coming to terms with each other upon an agreed constitution for a united India within the British Commonwealth, is that the constitutional problem should be discussed, free from the red herring of agitation for the withdrawal of British control, under the auspices of an essentially Indian government.

The Indian problem is difficult. I do not believe it to be insoluble. But if it is to be solved there are two things that we must do. One is to show, not only by pledges as to the future, but in present action, that, while we wish India to remain *within the Commonwealth*, we really are resolved that she should do so freely under a free government of her own. The other is that we should jettison the idea that such a government can be established on conventional British parliamentary lines.

3. Conclusions.

The immediate conclusions which I wish to commend to the War Cabinet from the above survey are as follows:

(*a*) We should cease chasing Indian party politicians in order to bring about some sort of interim settlement. It is for them, when they are ready for it, to agree upon their own final constitutional settlement. That is their affair.

(*b*) Our interim contribution to the final settlement should be to strengthen the authority of the existing Government of India under the present constitution, firstly by the respect we pay to it and by the extent to which we resolutely refrain from interfering in the ordinary conduct of its affairs, as well as by any steps we can take to assimilate the status of India externally to that of the Dominions, and, secondly, by the further progressive Indianization of its membership.

95

Mr Christie to Mr Abell[1]

MSS. EUR. F. 125/138

D.–o. No. 60/S. DEPARTMENT OF FOOD, NEW DELHI, *2 September 1943*

My dear George,

Herewith a note in reply to the two questions which you put to me over the telephone.

Yours sincerely,

W. H. J. CHRISTIE

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 7 September 1943 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

Enclosure to No. 95

His Excellency asked for brief replies to two questions:—

Q. 1. What is the Government of India doing for Bengal?

The Government of India is arranging to send to Bengal quantities of foodgrains—wheat, wheat-flour, rice and millets—from outside the Province, by rail and sea, at a rate which has averaged 1,300 tons a day. This is part of the planned distribution of surplus of foodgrains from supplying to receiving areas, known as the Basic Plan,[2] and it is supplemented by additional quotas as these become available from time to time.

This quantity of 1,300 tons a day is sufficient to feed 3 million people on a rationed basis of 1 lb. per head per day. It should, therefore, be ample to feed the entire population of Calcutta and its suburbs, which does not exceed 3½ million, including children who would not get the full adult ration. Rationing has not been introduced in Calcutta, and the above calculation is only to show that what Bengal is receiving from outside is sufficient to provide for its main food problem—the feeding of Calcutta.

The Government of India have helped the Government of Bengal financially with loans amounting to several crores of rupees.

Q. 2. What is the Government of Bengal doing for Bengal?

Bengal's total normal production of rice is between 8 and 9 million tons a year. Her last crop was not a very good one and was probably about 10 per cent. short of the normal figure. Bengal has also lost a small quantity of rice imported from Burma, but her net imports of this rice in an ordinary year were about 100,000 tons, a negligible figure. The Cyclone damaged last winter's crop and caused great havoc in the districts of south-west Bengal. Bengal's proximity to the war zone has generally caused a feeling of nervousness which does not encourage trade, and trade in foodstuffs in particular, to flow as freely as in normal times. The Bengal Government are, therefore, faced with a stiff administrative problem of making the best use of their own resources. They have recently conducted what was publicly called an anti-hoarding drive, but was in reality no more than a food census. This, however, has revealed surplus stocks, which were not known to exist, of the order of about 350,000 tons. In addition, the Bengal Government has announced that it is taking steps to procure the maximum surpluses of the autumn paddy crop which is now coming off the fields. This crop amounts to about 2 million tons normally, and, though it does not ordinarily come out of the villages, organised buying and distribution should make a substantial quantity of it available for urban areas.

In Calcutta itself the problem of distribution has in the past not been very satisfactorily handled, but it is now being taken in hand. It is aggravated by the existence of, even in normal times, a very large beggar population in the

city, to which has been added a large number of destitute people from the surrounding districts, especially those rendered homeless and without resources by the Cyclone. Such small resources as these people could find earlier in the year have now been exhausted, and in spite of the autumn crop the period from September to December when the main winter crop is harvested, is always a lean time for the Province. The Bengal Government are trying to cope with this problem of destitution by opening centres mostly on the outskirts of Calcutta and elsewhere throughout the Province from which free distribution is made of what is known as gruel ("kichri"). This consists of a small quantity of foodgrains with pulses and vegetables. Charitable organisations are also being helped and encouraged to open distribution centres.

A great many of the problems of Calcutta will be solved as soon as an efficient system of urban rationing has been introduced. This is now under active preparation and the Bengal Government have announced that they propose to introduce it from the 1st October 1943, though that may be rather optimistic.

[2] See No. 13, note 7.

96

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/78

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI *3–6 September 1943*

My dear Cunningham,

Very many thanks for your report[1] for the period ending August the 24th. I was much interested to get your news of the by-elections and agree that the success of the Muslim League in Sudhum is significant. I suppose there is a possibility of subsequent embarrassment in the fact that Muslim League successes are regarded as a victory for the British Government over subversive elements but we can meet such difficulties when we come to them. I was much amused with your story of the aged stork. I wonder who the genius was who thought of it as an electioneering device.

[1] No. 89.

97

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 312

MOST IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *4 September 1943, 5.55 pm*
Received: 4 September, 2.30 pm

1932–S. You should know that in my judgment we are moving rapidly towards a Section 93 situation in Bengal. All information at my (? disposal) (which is by no means complete) suggests that position will probably worsen rather than the reverse over autumn. In my judgment, there is a strong probability that we are face to face with a (? first class) emergency extending throughout the province and one unlikely to be fully resolved until after the war. I am increasingly impressed by the weakness and incompetence of the Provincial Government and you know as well as I do the critical nature of the situation that confronts us, a situation complicated by the complete inadequacy, corruption, and obstinacy of the Calcutta Corporation, a body which can only be got rid of or effectively controlled either by legislation which there is little (? chance) of getting through or by an Ordinance in a Section 93 situation. Further complication is grave weakness of administrative machine in Bengal. Indianisation has hit it hard, and here as elsewhere in India the severely deteriorating effects in terms of efficiency of Indianisation are beginning to emerge clearly. The European personnel is pretty average in quality and not too strong in numbers. To handle food situation and to clear up situation resulting from Calcutta ?C(orporation)'s mis-handling of this business we shall need considerable importation of staff. I can get that from C.-in-C.; but it would be impossible to appoint it and set it to work while Ministry was going.

2. I await Srivastava's proposals for dealing with food problem in the light of his recent visit, and will probably take them in Council in next couple of days. When situation generally was discussed in Council last Wednesday my colleagues were clearly much disturbed at position in Bengal. Sultan Ahmed remarked that we ought to stop at nothing. I asked whether invasion of provincial field, and taking over of responsibility by centre, was in view, and Sultan Ahmed on this danger signal hastily withdrew and endeavoured to qualify his suggestions. But I thought opportunity a good one to put it to my colleagues that they must have fully before them the calamitous effect on probable constitutional progress in India of our having to take over control in a ministerial province of the size and importance of Bengal, because a completely Indian ministry and a completely Indian non-official Municipal Corporation had shown themselves, the moment any real strain was put upon them, quite unable to bear it. I added that we might of course have to contemplate

steps on (sic? of) this nature, but that none of my colleagues should for a moment be in doubt as to their profound long term as well as immediate significance.

3. My colleagues listened to this without comment. Asoka Roy was however, in face of what I had said, strongly in favour of going ahead even to point of taking over control of province despite the arguments to which I had just drawn his attention. Usman suggested that much of the trouble in Bengal was due to Indianisation, a point feebly contested by Azizul Haque, but not taken up by any other of my colleagues.

4. I gather that the proposals of Food Department for dealing with the situation may be such as to aggravate the difficulty of handling it through a Ministry. Probability of very early action at shortest notice having to be considered is therefore great, and I feel bound to give you this preliminary warning at once.

5. Paragraph No 2 above shows my own sense of the (? deep) damage likely to follow from Indian constitutional point of view of action on these (? lines) it (sic? if) that is necessitated by this failure of Local Government etc., and hurt that will be done to cause and reputation of provincial autonomy and, on (? longer) view, to basic concept of self-government in India, but we cannot refuse to face facts. And the facts are unquestionable that this Indian government and this Indian Municipal Corporation (?? are) showing themselves incapable of grappling with a major problem, or even of maintaining modern standards of administration. So far as general politics are concerned I find it difficult to assess what Jinnah's reaction would be since Ministry which would be demitting office would be a Moslem League Ministry (though of course it is one containing Hindu elements). But I should have thought it was quite on cards that though he might protest he would in his heart be relieved that discredit of failure should be removed from Moslem shoulders, more particularly if Moslem League Ministry were being replaced by a Section 93 Government and not by a Ministry of a non-Moslem complexion. Hindus, Hindu Mahasabha, etc., would certainly complain loudly on general grounds, but again in their hearts would be more than satisfied to be rid of a Moslem League Ministry.

6. Above is bare outline of this problem. You will no doubt (? wish to) let Cabinet know at once. I am sure Cabinet (? will) bear constantly in mind the strategic significance of Bengal over the months ahead. I shall welcome any questions or considerations you may wish me to answer (? or omitted) to weigh. You may be certain that in (? considering) the whole issue I have not overlooked either its great general importance, or burden that would have to be carried by Governor-General and by Centre and decisive necessity of their succeeding where the Bengal Ministry and Calcutta Corporation (2 corrupt groups) [? have failed].

98

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 236–7

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *4 September 1943, 11.45 pm*
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *Received: 5 September*

944. My private and personal telegram 877.[1] Food imports. There is little hope of securing any modification in Government's decision without full co-operation of Leathers and I arranged to discuss matter with him orally on 3rd September. We went into it at great length and I pressed him most strongly but regret I was unable to move him appreciably on main issue. His position broadly is that he has an actual deficiency of ships towards meeting programme integrally connected with world-wide operational plans prepared by Chiefs of Staffs and approved. He assures me Chiefs of Staffs at Quebec saw your personal telegram 1742–S[2] of 13th August before coming to their final decision.

2. There seems to be nothing more I can do here pending Prime Minister's reply to my question whether matter should again come before Government and I confess I see little hope that even if he replies in affirmative this would now lead to an outcome in any way favourable. If nevertheless C.-in-C. apprehends that Chiefs of Staffs may not have given due weight to dangers involved it would be open to Auchinleck to cable independently to C.I.G.S. regarding possible effect on India as base of operations.

3. As regards Iraq barley and 50,000 tons of wheat[3] I will continue to do all I can to have these arrangements as fully and expeditiously implemented as possible and to endeavour to have latter wholly earmarked for India and not elsewhere.

[1] No. 83. [2] No. 78. [3] See No. 74.

99

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Jinnah

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *6 September 1943*

Dear Mr. Jinnah,
I have had your letter of 23rd August[1] about affairs in Kashmir for which I thank you. As you have correctly surmised I am aware from certain reports which have reached me that some uneasiness prevails in the State and that this

uneasiness has indeed persisted for some time past. I am, I need hardly tell you, in the closest contact with my Advisers on the whole topic and for this reason I do not find it necessary to take advantage of your very kind offer to send me a summary of recent developments based on information available to you from your own sources. I can assure you furthermore that the whole situation will continue to receive my constant attention and I hope that the doubts to which you have given expression about conditions in the State will presently be totally resolved.

In conclusion I would like to thank you for your courtesy in taking the trouble to invite my attention to the matter the importance of which I of course fully realise.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[1] No. 188.

100

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *6 September 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your private and secret letter of the 17th August.[1] I have, too, just had your telegram[2] giving the results of your further talks with Leathers. It is disappointing (though that is not your fault, for no one could have done more than you have to put our situation before the authorities). I am consulting the Chief as to your suggestion that he might send a personal telegram to the C.I.G.S., basing himself on the operational aspect, and will see what he says. My disposition is to have another shot if circumstances seem to warrant that after you have heard from Winston or been able to make personal contact with him. But however things may turn out I have discharged my own conscience in this matter; and if His Majesty's Government in face of the extremely strongly worded representations which I, with the full support of Auchinleck and of the Members of Council directly concerned, have made to them, decide that they must take the risks involved here, and that those risks are less great than the effect of any interference with their operational arrangements, that must be for them to say. But they can be in no doubt as to the view that I and my advisers take, and equally the responsibility for disregarding our advice is a responsibility that His Majesty's Government must carry.

2. We are still hard at it trying to ease the Bengal situation—a situation much complicated by the intense political rivalry that quite clearly so underlies

[1] No. 85. [2] No. 98.

every discussion. I discuss the question of Section 93, &c. later in this letter. But it is clear in the light of the discussion that we had in Council yesterday about the political and communal difficulties if it has to be applied, that Asoka Roy and the sort of Hindu mind which thinks and feels like his, are very strongly for turning out the present Government; while the Muslims, for purely communal reasons, are equally reluctant to see it turned out. I have little doubt myself either, that both in the organisation of relief and in the working up of a campaign of protest against the alleged failure of everyone to help Bengal an active political campaign is being waged by the opposite sides. Shyama Prasad Mukerjee has everything to gain and nothing to lose from making the picture as black as possible. The same is true of Huq; and both Huq and Mukerjee carry substantial responsibility for failure to organise against the food shortage at a much earlier date. The Centre is of course Whipping Boy. But I think you should see the note[3] which I asked the Food Department to prepare for me a couple of days ago, which shows what we have done for Bengal, and what Bengal have done (or rather failed to do) for themselves; and I send you also copy of the memorandum[4] which my Food Department circulated for consideration in Council, which indicates very clearly the respects in which the existing administration in that province (and its predecessors) have failed to come up to scratch. But even accepting that politics and general incompetence enter in, we have to face the situation as it stands; and on all the information available to me and to my advisers, the threat that the situation, unless we can remedy it (and imports would of course have been an obvious method of doing that) is likely to be to operations based on India, and particularly on eastern India, is very great indeed.

3. I thought it only fair to warn you of the possibility of a breakdown and of a Section 93 situation.[5] For very important issues are involved, and while we may turn the corner, equally an urgent decision may be called for, and it seems to me desirable that we should all of us have as much time to consider the various aspects of the problem as possible. I discussed the situation at large in Council yesterday, warning them in the first place (since the memorandum circulated by the Food Department, with my approval, had touched on Section 93) that responsibility in relation to Section 93 was of course a matter for the Governor-General. It emerged very early indeed in the discussion that given the fact that the problem we were trying to solve was essentially a provincial problem arising out of matters in the provincial list and their mishandling by a provincial government in the exercise of the natural powers of that government, and given also the fact that the question as to ousting that government was not a matter for Council, a good deal of the talk was slightly in the air. I could not help being struck, as I listened, by the fact that the discussion was essentially unconstitutional; for the matter was all on the

provincial list. But the justification was of course the fact that the scheme of the Act might reasonably be argued to be breaking down in present conditions in Bengal; that a Ministry supported (or so we must assume) by a majority of the Legislature and willing to carry on the government, was showing itself unable to govern. I do not, of course, forget that the safety valve of a dissolution is at present more or less disabled by the fact that we are at war; but I cannot honestly say that I would expect a general election to throw up a government less ineffective than the present one or its predecessor. Let me, however, revert to the discussion in Council. It was obvious that certain of my colleagues, having had time to give fuller weight to the warning I gave them last week of the long-term implications of a collapse of the Bengal Government and the supersession of the Calcutta Municipality, were anxious to avoid responsibility for a state of things that would do so much harm to India's prospects in the constitutional field, and that in consequence they were a little shy of going much further than suggesting a greater degree of control from here, the establishment of a Government of India Food Commissioner, &c. Roy again came out hot and strong in favour of Section 93 as the only possible method of dealing with the situation. That immediately provoked (as I rather anticipated that it might) Sir Mohamed Usman, who with the utmost vigour warned Roy that any endeavour to oust a Muslim Ministry would be bitterly resented by Muslims throughout India, and that the issues involved much transcended the boundaries of Bengal. I poured oil on these troubled waters, and brought the discussion amicably to an end. But I confess that its general trend left me disposed to put the risk of fairly substantial trouble with the Muslims, if we should be forced into Section 93, rather higher than when I sent you my telegram No. 1932–S[6] of the 4th September.

* * *

7. You have my sincere sympathy in having to struggle with Lord Cherwell! I need not say how completely I agree with what you say in paragraph 3 of your letter.

* * *

7 September 1943

9. I hope to let you have, by next week's bag, a reply to your letter of the 16th May 1941[7] and the important note enclosed in it about the Indian States. I have wished Wylie to have a chance of seeing my draft, and I have only received it back from him today. He has made one or two suggestions which I should like to work in, but I cannot do so in time for today's mail.

* * *

[3] No. 95. [4] No. 93. [5 and 6] No. 97.

[7] Enclosing a note on 'The Future of the Indian States in relation to Constitutional Development'. L/P&S/13/889: ff 63–72; for the reply see No. 111.

11. I passed on to Raisman the points you made in paragraphs 4 and 5 of your letter of the 5th of August,[8] and I do not think that I can do better than to send you a copy of his comments.[9]

Best wishes.

[8] No. 72. [9] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

101

Memorandum by Mr Amery[1]

L/PO/6/108a: ff 93–5

INDIA OFFICE, *7 September 1943*

SOME MAJOR PROBLEMS FOR DISCUSSION

A. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL

It would seem that any far-reaching advance in the nature either of economic or social reconstruction in India would have to originate from the centre. In view of the constitutional position of the provinces that could best be done by some system of grants-in-aid for specific purposes. The proportion of the total expenditure contributed might vary according to the purpose, i.e. it need not be the same for electricity development as for education.

The best way of finding the money would seem to be the announcement of a really large loan, e.g. 500 crores, for the purpose of a five-year policy. It would not of course be possible to raise the whole sum at once and the loan should be continuously on tap. But a big effort of publicity for raising India on to a new plane might secure far larger sums than are now secured merely for the war effort.

The loan might take two forms: one an ordinary long-range investment at a reasonably high rate of interest, say 4 or even 5 per cent; the other confined to the Savings Bank type of investor in the nature of a war bond or savings certificate with a prize element attached.

Such a loan really well-pushed might do more to moderate the present inflationary situation than anything else.

B. THE FUTURE CONSTITUTION

While we have always said that the constitution must come from Indians themselves, the declaration of August 1940[2] made it clear that we were anxious to promote enquiry into the problem and it looks as if the time had come for taking some step to implement that promise. What is indicated is not anything in the nature of a constitutional convention, but of a preparatory study com-

mission to collect materials and to investigate both the problem of what kind of approach should be made to the framing of a constitution and what kind of structure such a constitution might have. The difficulty is to take an initiative which is not at once prejudiced in the eyes of Indian public opinion. Various solutions may be suggested. One might be that the Government of India should simply announce its willingness to find secretarial staff and general expenses of any committee or commission that constituted itself. The probability is that this would lead to nothing, or only to a competition between uninfluential busybodies. Another would be for (a) the Viceroy personally, (b) the Government of India, (c) the Supreme Court, to set up a small commission of people with constitutional and juristic experience, not active politicians. Of these alternatives (b) might lead conceivably to a communal divergence within the Executive itself, while (c) might be held to affect, however slightly, the strictly non-political position of the Supreme Court.

Another and more revolutionary suggestion would be for the Viceroy personally to invite the Presidents of the United States, Switzerland and Soviet Russia, together with the Prime Ministers of Canada and Australia, to nominate constitutional experts, thus eliminating both the British Imperial factor and that of Indian local controversy.

The reference to such a Commission would clearly be to confine itself to the structure of a possible Indian constitutional solution and to the method of approach to it, leaving entirely on one side for separate enquiry here and in India the question of the settlement of outstanding obligations, etc. with this country.

As to procedure it would probably be best, if such a committee held its meetings *in camera* and published no evidence.

A conceivable alternative in the last resort, if no satisfactory commission can be appointed, or if its conclusions are not taken up by public opinion, might be for Parliament to impose a purely temporary constitution, setting up India on its own, after the war, with a time-limit within which an alternative constitution might be framed by agreement.

C. EXTENSION OF PRESENT CONSTITUTION

If what we have got to meet is Indian nationalism rather than Indian democracy *à l'anglaise* and if Indians have shown themselves more competent as dewans and nominated councillors than as politicians attempting to be simultaneously executives, then there is a strong case for going on with Indianisation under the present constitution. Indeed, it may be that Indians will be unable to

[1] This memorandum was sent to Lord Munster on 8 September with a covering note inviting him, on 10 September, to the first of two meetings between Mr Amery, Lord Wavell, Sir D. Monteath and Mr E. Jenkins at which the subjects raised in the memorandum were to be discussed. L/PO/6/108a: f 92.

[2] Vol. I, Appendix I.

get away from the anti-British complex sufficiently to get down to the business of their own constitution until they realise that they are in fact governed by their own countrymen. From this point of view Indians, while admitting that progress has been made, continue to point to the fact that the three most important departments of Home Affairs, Finance and External Affairs, have been retained in British hands.

There are considerable arguments, during the war at any rate, for keeping Home Affairs in the hands of an experienced English civil servant like Twynam, in spite of the fact that Law and Order have been administered by Indian ministers in the provinces.

On the other hand, there seems to be a good deal to be said for transferring Finance to an Indian, not necessarily an Indian financier, but rather a man of general ability and courage. We shall be faced with a very difficult problem in finding any kind of settlement to the question of the sterling balances. It may well be that an agreement with the Treasury arrived at by an Indian Finance Member could be put across the Executive when the same agreement could not be carried by someone like Sir J. Raisman, whom his colleagues would still always suspect of being anxious to stand well with the British Government. Moreover the Finance Department does not impinge so directly on the communal question as the Home Department.

That applies even more to External Affairs. This has hitherto been held in the Viceroy's own hand. But it deals with matters which are far less affected by Indian internal controversies than by the sheer facts of India's geography. Moreover, anything that would help to give Indians, beginning with the Executive Council, an outlook beyond India's frontiers, must help towards a broader outlook on internal problems. There is the further point that India will undoubtedly have to be represented at the Peace Conference and nothing would enhance her status so much as that she should be represented by one who could not only claim to be her Foreign Minister, but who could show in fact a realistic grasp of external problems affecting India's interests.

Closely connected with this is the question of giving full Ministerial status to India's representatives abroad, i.e. in the first instance Bajpai and subsequently Menon. In the same category would come a definite increase in the functions and status assigned to India's High Commissioner here and to the establishment of Indian High Commissioners at Ottawa and Canberra.

There is also the question how far Indianisation in the Army might be accelerated by a few carefully selected bold promotions.

D. THE VICEROY'S STAFF

One question still to be settled is what staff the Viceroy should take with him in his Minister of State capacity and entirely outside his staff as Governor-General.

Another question is how far it may be desirable for the Viceroy in his personal capacity to make up for the Indianisation of his Executive by gradually building up a small personal Brains Trust of junior secretaries with special knowledge of such problems as finance, economics, publicity, etc. One of Sir S. Cripps' boldly visionary social reconstructors might be quite useful in actual harness and in more continuous contact with the practical aspects of the problem.

L. S. A.

102

General Auchinleck to General Sir A. Brooke

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 230

IMMEDIATE *8 September 1943, 10.03 am*
MOST SECRET *Received: 8 September, 5.50 pm*

70197/C. Personal and secret for C.I.G.S. from Gen. Auchinleck.

In view of grave future food situation in Bengal and also of shortage in other parts of India I must ask that you will use your influence with H.M.G. to do all they can to help Govt. of India in this matter specially by permitting import of food grains into India. I realise the shortage of shipping and that it is true that there may in fact be enough food in India already. So far as shipping is concerned, the import of food is to my mind just as if not more important than the import of munitions. Although food may exist in sufficient quantity in this country it is impossible to get it from the hoarders and distribute where needed owing to the fact that whole country is very much under-administrated also because of the weakness of the comm[unicatio]ns system generally and above all because of the lack of an informed and strong public opinion. These and [are?] conditions which cannot be remedied now and result is that unless Govt. of India recommendations are accepted the internal situation particularly in Bengal and Assam may deteriorate so much as inevitably to have a serious if not disastrous effect on coming operations. I brought this matter to your notice before in par. 7 of my telegram 63549/C[1] of 2 Aug and I do so again now only because I feel that the general situation is growing worse not better. Apart from

[1] This para. read: 'Internal situation. Continues quiet but there is some expectation of recrudescence of disturbances during August to mark anniversary of Congress activities last year. Precautionary measures have been taken. Food situation still gives rise to anxiety and danger of civil disturbances and dislocation of industry from this cause by no means past. It is of highest importance from strategical and general military point of view that government of India should receive all possible aid in dealing with this situation which is most serious in my opinion. The narrowness of the margins to which we are working particularly in regard to transportation facilities cannot be overstressed and any additional strain on our limited resources might have disastrous effects.' R/30/1/4: f 132.

the food situation there is grave danger of inflation all round. Import of grain would go far to lessen this by bringing down prices. Will be most grateful for your help.

103

Mr. Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *8 September 1943*

I seem to have left quite a gap on my side of our long correspondence now drawing near its close. But I have been away for the better part of a fortnight and most of the things that have happened have reached you fully by telegram. I had a certain amount of work sent down to me daily and came up to town once or twice, but actually got a whole eight days consecutively away from the office for the first time for three years.

[Para. 2, on suggestions for the Governorship of Bengal, omitted.]

3. I have circulated to the Cabinet your rather despondent telegram[1] about the prospects of ministerial government in Bengal. It all tends to confirm my belief that if Indians are to govern themselves it cannot be on our particular parliamentary lines. To learn to combine the qualities of an administrator concerned primarily with the national welfare and of a politician concerned primarily with that of a party, has taken us a good many centuries and I would not say that the result, even now, is perfection. Still, it does work, and in a great crisis remarkably well. But it obviously is too much for the ordinary Indian, who, on the other hand, seems to be quite capable, whether as the Dewan of a State or as an Executive Councillor, of doing good and public-spirited work. That brings me back to the view that somehow or other the Swiss or American systems, under which the Executive is independent of the Legislature, however liable to friction and deadlock, would be essentially better for Indian conditions. I have been reading the proofs of Coupland's third volume,[2] due to appear next month, and he comes down very definitely in favour of the Swiss system in the Provinces.

4. Mountbatten's appointment[3] has been warmly acclaimed here and in America and has, I think, had quite a good reception in India. This is a source of some personal gratification to myself, for I suggested him for the post[4] as soon as ever it was decided to have a separate South-East Asia Command, and have returned to the charge at intervals up to within a day or two of the appointment. Winston at first brushed it aside as entirely impossible and then

gradually began to think of it as at any rate conceivable before he swung round wholeheartedly to the idea. A Mountbatten-Wingate combination ought to bring some real originality into a warfare which, to coin an awful word originally used by Hore-Belisha, is essentially triphibious. "Tribious" would be etymologically more correct, but apparently would sound unduly curt to ears thinking of it in contrast to the trisyllable "amphibious".

[Para. 5, on the establishment of a Cabinet Committee on Basic English, omitted.]

6. To return for a moment to South-East Asia Command, I think Auchinleck deserves every credit for the way in which he has obviously done his best to make things easy and not raise unnecessary difficulties. There is plenty of room for disagreement if those concerned want to disagree, but I have every hope that the triumvirate of Wavell, Auchinleck and Mountbatten will get on well together.

I am glad to agree to this paragraph.
L.

[Para. 7, on information questions, omitted.]

8. As regards the food question, I sent you a very full telegram[5] reporting the result of our talk with Leathers. His attitude was essentially that of a man with a heavy overdraft of his own who therefore cannot promise to give an advance to anyone else. But at our parting he said a few friendly words to the effect that he would keep his eye open for any help that he could give us if the situation improved. So we can only hope the situation will improve, either from the Indian point of view or from that of the shipping available. There again, I expect to be bombarded with questions about the conditions in Bengal as soon as the House meets.

9. The Inflation Committee had another meeting at which Cherwell was as egregious as before. But on the whole his performances are helping to consolidate the Committee itself in the right direction and I am inclined to think that the appointment of a committee should be really helpful in the long run with the Cabinet and above all with Winston.

10. I am very glad that you were able to persuade[6] the Executive to hold up any precipitate decision over retaliation on South Africa. It is no use India's cutting off her own nose to spite South Africa's face over this, especially if it is

[1] No. 97.
[2] Professor R. Coupland, *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, Part III, *The Future of India* (London, Oxford University Press, 1943).
[3] Lord Mountbatten's appointment as Supreme Allied Commander, S.E. Asia, had been announced in Quebec on 25 August.
[4] See Vol. III, Nos. 751 and 758. [5] No. 98. [6] See No. 82, para. 5 and No. 87, para. 7.

going to interfere with the war. There is, moreover, the difficulty that India has not really got a constitutional *locus standi* in the matter, in so far as the people against whom discrimination is exercised are not Indians in the legal and constitutional sense, though of Indian origin. India may be very much interested one of these days in standing up to the Chinese claim that everybody of Chinese origin is still a member of the Chinese State, on whose behalf China is entitled to intervene. In this connection, I hope whatever may be decided upon should only affect the Union of South Africa. Southern Rhodesia, for instance, has hitherto taken up a very different attitude towards her small Indian resident population, though the possibility of trouble is on the horizon even there.

11. I have now read the Governor's replies[7] on the line to be taken if Gandhi chooses again to fast, and I am glad to see from paragraph 2 of your letter of 4th August[8] the special attention you are giving to the question of publicity. Timely warning of Gandhi's intention will enable us to secure the co-operation of the Ministry of Information and the B.B.C. in this matter. The widespread interest and comment which the news will excite in America as well as here makes it very important that at the outset a full statement should be issued by the Government of India as on the last occasion in justification of their policy. Thereafter a close control should be exercised by the censorship, as you suggest, and even if a daily bulletin is found necessary, I hope that any possible care may be taken to ensure that the medical reports are kept to a matter-of-fact tone without dwelling on details of physical distress like that issued by the six doctors on 21st February (Home Department telegram No. 1397).[9]

This does not look as though Mr.G. were going to walk out of his Palace on Sept. 20th!

L.

12. I have just been reading Sultan Ahmed's speech on the National War Front at Patna in July, and have been very much impressed by the breadth and quality of his handling of his subject. It struck me as really first-rate of its kind and one can only hope that it got publicity. It all confirms the view which we have both held that one of the most useful of the functions of an Indian Executive is to get it to talk so that the Government and its policy can find effective exposition through Indian mouthpieces. The more you can get your colleagues to assert themselves at Public meetings and over the wireless the better. Meanwhile, I should be very glad, if you think it appropriate, to let Sultan Ahmed know that I read his speech with interest and admiration and should like to congratulate him on it.

I don't know who wrote it.

L.

The other side of the question, of course, is how to get your colleagues effectively publicised and, as far as possible, boosted when they do lift their

voices. I don't know whether the vernacular press boycotts their efforts, but if so we want indirect devices with which one may be able to overcome that. In that connection, of course, Britanova,[10] if we can get it started, might be readily useful. This is, no doubt, one of the subjects you will be discussing with Joyce when he reaches you.

[Para. 13, on emergency arrangements for the Governorship of Bombay; and para. 14, on the wages of Indian seamen, omitted.]

15. In reading the latest statement of constitutional reforms in Indian States, I was struck by the evidence given of the progress of the Panchayat system and of representation built upon it. I see that in a number of States (e.g. Hyderabad, Jodhpur, Pataudi and Korea) new Panchayats have been established, and that tributes are paid to their success in Jodhpur and Mewar. This seems a most satisfactory development. The extending use made of Panchayats as the basis of representation of the opinion of the subjects in these States makes one wonder whether Panchayats may not eventually be found the most suitable electoral unit in rural constituencies in India as a whole.

16. The great news of the moment, of course, is the unconditional surrender of Italy, which Eisenhower is to announce by broadcast in half-an-hour's time. This will indeed make an enormous difference to the whole course of the war. More than that one cannot say, but the possibilities in the direction either of France or of the Balkans must be obvious to you. What the Germans mean to do about this we have as yet no inkling and it may well be that they will attempt to hold Italy north of say Leghorn, at any rate for a time.

17. I am glad you have been having pleasant farewell meetings. I have no doubt whatever that as your long term of office draws to a close not only those who know and understand here, but Indians generally, will increasingly appreciate the great work you have done.

(*Tinkle,—Tinkle!*)

L.,—18.9.43.

[7] MSS. EUR. F. 125/111. [8] No. 70. [9] Not printed in Vol. III. L/P&J/8/600: f 313.
[10] 'Britanova' was a war-time news agency, concerned with the Middle East and used as a channel by official departments. The extension of its coverage to the Indian sub-continent was under consideration.

104

Mr. Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: ff 293–4

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *9 September 1943, 2 pm*

PERSONAL

20541. Your personal telegram 4th September 1932–S.[1] Bengal. I have as you suggested circulated this to Cabinet without comment but your full and careful review of the factors in this serious situation gives me and my colleagues an indication of the drastic action likely to be required to remedy the immediate local situation and the far-reaching consequences to be apprehended from it.

2. Though I do not question your view that present Ministry is incapable of handling the problem adequately, that no alternative competent Ministry is in sight, and that remedy can only be found in S. 93, I am not altogether clear by what process you anticipate that resultant Section 93 situation may be reached. However convinced you and the Governor may be of the incompetence of the present Bengal Ministers, I think it would be very difficult to justify their dismissal on that score so long as they purport to command confidence of Legislature, and I doubt indeed whether to do so and proceed at once to assumption of control by Governor could be held, beyond challenge, to be in accordance with the terms of Section 93. Some failure on their part to carry on the government of Bengal in accordance with the provisions of the Government of India Act seems to be necessary ground for such action. No doubt time factor now precludes adoption of line suggested in connection with Budget impasse in my telegram 27th August 19422.[2] That might have forced issue within ambit of Provincial politics but in default of developments on that line some other clear issue seems necessary on which Bengal Government may be brought to toe the line.

3. I infer from your riposte to Sultan Ahmed in paragraph 2 that use of Section 102 or 126A was in your mind. This possibility has been also in mine for existing situation seems one to which such emergency provision could be held to apply.

4. I am not yet aware of Srivastava's proposals nor of what Food Department has in mind.[3] I must therefore attempt to explain my reading of situation in general terms in the hope that this may help to clarify issue before you. The first requirement seems to be to secure competent handling of the food problem by the Provincial Government in compliance with all-India policy. A consequential requirement is that Provincial Government should exercise effective control of the Calcutta Corporation, various departments of which I assume to be essential element in the machinery for distribution of food in

Calcutta. I understand from your paragraph 4 that the crisis may be provoked by the requirements of the Food Department of the Central Government involving employment of the emergency powers of Section 126A. But these it seems to me may be brought into play in two different ways.

5. If under sub section (a) of Section 126A the Governor-General in Council were to give directions to Bengal Government as to the manner in which it should use its executive authority to ensure the effective carrying out of the Central Government's food policy, it would no doubt be the duty of the Governor to insist on his Ministers taking whatever action the Central Government specified, for example, some such step as the appointment of a Special Commissioner—possibly from outside Bengal—upon whom Ministers would devolve all necessary powers to control the distribution of food in Calcutta and throughout the Province. Very possibly such insistence would of itself lead the Ministry to tender resignation much more probably if he insisted also that to carry out the lawful direction of the Central Government they must take power by legislation to supersede Calcutta Corporation. If they refused there would be clear legal ground for dismissal. Such development whether or not it could be claimed to be in compliance with constitutional propriety might be justifiable in the eyes of Indian public and of the world outside because linked with food problem. In the event of Ministry's resignation or dismissal in such circumstances the Governor, *ex hypothesi* satisfied that he could find no other Ministry prepared to fulfil requirements of the Central Government and capable of carrying necessary legislation for that purpose, would clearly have no alternative but to apply Section 93 and himself take all action to comply with directions of Central Government.

6. Do I gather it to be your view that action under sub section (a) of Section 126A might not meet the case and that in order to get rid at once of the obstruction afforded by the corrupt and incompetent Corporation, legislative action would be necessary at the Centre under sub section (b) or S. 102 amounting in fact to an Ordinance by the Governor-General amending Calcutta Corporation Act and enabling supersession of Corporation by municipal administration which if 126A sub section (b) were used would be responsible to the Central Government? In that event it seems clear to me, as I think it does to

[1] No. 97.

[2] This telegram related to the impasse which had followed the ruling by the Speaker of the Bengal Legislative Assembly on 7 July that motions were out of order which sought, retrospectively, to grant such Budget demands as had not been passed before Mr Fazlul Huq's resignation the previous March. The telegram suggested that the Speaker and the Legislature should be informed that the method proposed for passing the Budget was the only practicable one and that if the Assembly failed to provide the Government with supply it would bear full responsibility for the need to go into Section 93. L/P&J/8/651.

[3] See No. 93.

you, that whereas executive intervention by the Central Government under sub section (a) would be very likely to lead by rapid stages to resignation of Ministry and Section 93 situation, promulgation of Central Ordinance by you would be even more likely to have this effect.

7. Whichever process were found necessary to meet the needs of the local situation, it is intervention by the Central Government that is involved. This could hardly fail to be recognised as implying the inefficiency of the Bengal administration in matters which are peculiarly for provincial Governments to handle and the failure of provincial autonomy at any rate on the basis of a Parliamentary Executive on British lines with all the long-term consequences you foresee.

8. I note that you recognise that if by one or other of processes mentioned above the Ministry has to be got rid of it is of the utmost importance to ensure that the measure would be justified by the Governor's success in dealing in Section 93 conditions with problems which the Ministry had failed to solve. I entirely agree. This points to the necessity of giving Rutherford[4] time to look round and assess the personnel he has to hand and what he might require to import to make a success of his task.

9. I am grateful to you for giving me and my colleagues warning of the length to which we may however reluctantly be forced to go, but I presume that you will hold your hand till you can obtain from Rutherford a full and frank review of the situation, and of the means by which it may be remedied. I shall be glad to learn his views as soon as he is in a position to frame them. I presume that, in the light of such review, you will be able to indicate more precisely the action which you deem to be required and in view of far-reaching effects will consult me and enable me to consult my colleagues before proceeding to apply it.

[4] In tel. 930 of 1 September 1943, Mr Amery had informed Lord Linlithgow that the King had approved the appointment of Sir T. Rutherford to act for Sir J. Herbert as Governor of Bengal. In tel. 946 of 5 September he informed him that the Commission of Appointment had been signed the previous day. L/PO/8/31: ff 249, 245.

105

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3298: f 121

PERSONAL INDIA OFFICE, *10 September 1943, 6 pm*
Received: 11 September

20660. Question for answer in Commons, 23rd September, beginning of new Session, invites statement on the present food situation, specially Bengal,

Cochin, Travancore, Bombay, suggests present food situation aggravated by delay of Central Government in introducing remedies, their lack of firmness in dealing with hoarders, and failure of Provincial Governments to co-operate.

Either in answering this question or otherwise I shall certainly have to make a fairly full statement at an early date and I should be glad if you would let me have material and an appreciation for this purpose, say about 20th September, by telegraph.

106

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 393

L/E/8/3297: f 114

Indian Food Situation

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *10 September 1943*

I circulate for the information of the War Cabinet the attached extracts from the Weekly Intelligence Summary from General Headquarters, India, dated the 20th August, which has recently been received. In view of the recent decision of the War Cabinet regarding Shipment of Food-stuffs to India (W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions)[1] I feel that the War Cabinet should be aware of this report.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 106

[*There follow paras. 5, 6, 7, 9, and para. 15 beginning* ' . . . *Elsewhere in the summary . . .*' *as in Annex to No. 119.*]

[1] No. 71.

107

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *10 September 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have had a good deal of talk with the Chief about the release of the Indian formations now in the Middle East with a view to their return to India, and he has been kind enough to send me a copy of his personal and secret letter of the

9th September[1] to the C.I.G.S. I send you a copy of this, and would ask you to treat it as entirely personal. I do not imagine Auchinleck would have the slightest objection to your seeing it, as I have in fact promised to support to you the requests contained in it. But he is out of Delhi on tour for a day or two and I have been unable to obtain his specific permission. I think there is a very great deal in what he says, and much hope that you will be able to lend his proposals in paragraph 2 your support. I do not overlook that we have just had this further request for the employment of Indian troops in Italy, but my support to Auchinleck is given with full knowledge of that fact.

* * *

5. I let Raisman know what you were kind enough to tell me in paragraph 2 of your letter of 17th August[2] about the Kingsley Wood Committee, &c., and think you may care to have his comments which are as follows:—

"We here would entirely endorse the conclusion reached by the Committee as reported by the Secretary of State. Reduction of Military and Supply demands on India would undoubtedly retard the progressive development of inflationary conditions here, by mitigating the intensity of the root cause of the trouble. Our main apprehension at the present moment is in regard to the effect of new demands from the S.E. Asia Command unless the latter are in receipt of financial and economic advice of requisite quality. This indeed is the darkest cloud that now overhangs our economic future.

"Our efforts to control and to eliminate speculation from organised markets have met with considerable success. It is not possible to say how long these measures will continue to be effective if the main inflationary factor, viz. continuous expansion of the currency, continues to operate. Expansion can be slowed down by intensive taxation and borrowing, and we are doing all that is possible in that way in the Central field and by exerting pressure on Provinces and States. But in the conditions of India and with the demands on the resources of the country at anything like the present level expansion of the currency cannot be entirely stopped.

"The most important market in India, viz. that in foodgrains, is not an organised market, and in the conditions and having regard to the size of India control is almost impossible of attainment. It is here that outside help would be most direct and most effective, and it will be a matter for the most profound regret if His Majesty's Government are not sufficiently impressed with the importance and immediacy of the question to grant the assistance for which we have asked. In its absence the food position is bound to react to the inflationary factors now present, causing suffering and distress to the poor, great bitterness and a deep undermining of morale.

"Sale of gold and diamonds will relieve the situation to a limited extent, and that is all to the good and should be exploited to the full. It would be far more

effective however if it could be reinforced by corresponding action on an adequate scale on the silver front. With the lapse of time however our hopes of this grow fainter. It is a tragic but apparently inescapable fact that although the United Nations have ample silver at their command, the entrenched silver interests in America can prevent its being freely used to preserve the economic structure of a country which is to be the main base of the Allied offensive against Japan."

[1] Enclosing a copy of a paper he had produced on the size and composition of the Indian Army. In the letter, General Auchinleck requested General Brooke to consider seriously the return of Indian troops in the Middle East and to support the provision of shipping to enable regular home leave to be given to Indian troops overseas. In para. 2, General Auchinleck explained that India's troops in the Middle East were her most seasoned and experienced and their inclusion in the formations for the offensive against the Japanese would greatly strengthen them. L/WS/1/707: ff 202–7.

[2] No. 85.

108

Note of an Interview between Mr Amery and Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/PO/6/108a: ff 87–8

Also present at the interview were: Lord Munster, Sir D. Monteath, Mr Patrick, Mr Jenkins and Mr Turnbull

LORD WAVELL said that it seemed to him that the main issue which would face him on his arrival in India was whether to stand on the position that nothing could be done in the way of political advance until there is some radical change in the situation, for example the end of the war or the death of Gandhi, or whether to make some attempt at progress in the near future.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE said that there seemed to him to be a third possibility, namely that we should do something now to promote Indian agreement as to the form of a post-war settlement. What he had in mind was the setting up of a body which might collect data and study the facts in preparation for the framing of a constitution.

LORD WAVELL said he was not thinking of this, but rather of the possibility of a renewed attempt to secure a provisional government at the Centre containing the party leaders, on the main lines of the Cripps proposals. It seemed to him that the alternatives were to make an attempt of this kind or to leave things as they are. He wanted guidance and he thought that he ought to have the guidance of H.M.G. as to whether, if, after he had assessed the situation, he judged that a further such attempt should be made, he was to make that attempt,

[1] This meeting apparently took place on 10 September; see No. 101, note 1.

or whether H.M.G. wished to take no step in that direction until there were some radical change of circumstance.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE said that it might be held that we were bound by the Cripps Offer and the statement that it still stands, to go for a Central Government composed of the party leaders, but he thought that any renewed attempt to obtain that would fail because neither the Congress nor the Moslem League wanted such a government.

LORD WAVELL agreed that the chances of success did not appear to be great. As he saw it, however, the present Council, selected and nominated by the Governor-General, was an entirely different organisation from a government composed of the party leaders. In constitutional form there might be no difference, but in substance there would be a very great difference. There was no doubt that if such a government could be obtained there would be substantial advantages. Broadly these would be a great relaxation of political and communal tension with the disappearance of the present sense of frustration and a much more hopeful prospect of a reasonable solution being achieved by agreement after the war. At the same time, the risks were undoubtedly very great. If such a government were formed and proved intractable and had to be got rid of, there would be no alternative available except an official government. What he felt he needed a decision on was whether if on examination he found any possibility of forming such a government, H.M.G. would wish him to pursue that possibility and be ready to take the risks.

In reply to the Secretary of State, Lord Wavell said that he contemplated that such an offer would adhere to the conditions laid down at the time of the Cripps Offer, i.e. the Governor-General's overriding power would be retained. He contemplated, however, that the Executive would have to consist entirely of Indian members with the exception of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief. A general pledge to support the war would have to be given by the parties before they were allowed to participate in the Council.

As to such details as the method of forming an Executive on this basis, the division of seats among the parties, and the precise manner of the approach, Lord Wavell felt that these were details which he ought to work out later.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE said that the proposition which Lord Wavell was considering raised the issue whether the British parliamentary executive was a suitable form of government for India, since the formation of an Executive Council composed of party leaders would prejudice the future constitutional settlement: once it came into existence it would continue until a new constitution could be framed. This might increase the difficulty of securing a settlement and might harden the situation in such a way that no settlement on any basis except Pakistan would be possible.

LORD WAVELL said that he did not feel that this was a strong objection, in view of the advantages which might be obtained in the way of mutual co-operation and understanding between those who work together.

MR. PATRICK asked whether an Executive constituted on this basis would have power to control provincial governments in the same way as the present Government of India has under section 126(A) in matters connected with the conduct of the war. If so, there would be danger of orders being imposed on the Moslem provinces by an Executive in which the Moslems were in a minority and this might lead to serious friction. It was felt, however, that this would be one of the situations in which the Viceroy's overriding power might have to be invoked if reasonable behaviour could not be obtained by persuasion.

It was agreed that an offer of this kind was not worth making unless it were made to the Congress as well as to other parties and with the intention of the Congress participating. The Secretary of State thought that the offer would not succeed. Lord Wavell said that in his judgment there was a 50 per cent chance of success. The main reason for the failure of the Cripps Offer had been the conviction in India that we were losing the war. Mr. Jenkins thought that the chances of success were about 1 in 6. The Secretary of State said that he felt that there was much to be said for the present Executive Council, if it were strengthened in every possible way, and he would not be alarmed at the possibility of holding elections to the Central Legislature and leaving the Executive as at present constituted to hold its own with a newly elected Assembly, giving it reasonable freedom to meet the demands of the Legislature.

MR. PATRICK pointed out that there was a danger that the party leaders would agree to enter the Governor-General's Council, but, as in 1919,[2] as soon as they had done so, would put forward further demands. In particular, they might have different ideas from ours and those of our Allies on what did and what did not affect the conduct of the war. They might be very intractable about such questions as war transport.

LORD WAVELL said that he fully appreciated these risks, but the situation had altered a great deal since 1942, the Congress had lost prestige and were not in a position to give such trouble as they had then. Moreover there were now large Allied forces in India and neither we nor the Americans were in a mood to tolerate obstructive tactics and a Government of India, even if composed of the party leaders, would hesitate to put obstructions in the way of the Allied forces. Mr. Patrick observed that it would be easier for the new Executive to accept the consequences of resignation than for us to dispense with their services once they had assumed office. Lord Wavell said he was not sure of this though he

[2] During 1919 and 1920, Khan Bahadur M. M. Shafi, a former President of the All-India Muslim League, Rao Bahadur B. N. Sarma, a Madras politician prominent in the central legislature, and Dr (later Sir) T. B. Sapru, a leader of the moderates, joined the Governor-General's Council.

recognised the danger. He thought that under any such government we might lose a good deal that was of value to us and that the war effort might be adversely affected to some extent: on the other hand, if the offer worked we might avoid what would otherwise be an extremely difficult situation in about 2 years' time.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE said that if this proposition was to be pursued the assent not only of H.M.G. ought to be obtained, but in some way the concurrence of the present Government of India. LORD WAVELL said he appreciated the difficulties of moving without consulting his present Executive Council, but he also saw great dangers in the possibility of leakage wrecking the chances of success.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE said that he would consult Mr. Attlee on the possibility that the matter might be put before the India Committee of the Cabinet which had sat before the Cripps Mission and might be reconstituted to consider this subject.

109

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 291

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *11 September 1943, 12.20 am*
Received: 11 September, 5.15 am

1993–S. I am most grateful for closely reasoned and most helpful argument in your personal telegram series 20,541[1] which has been very useful; and I am grateful also to you for putting Cabinet in possession of my views.

2. I fear my telegram September 4th[2] was in some respects too concise and I amplify it below to cover point raised by you, and also to indicate outcome of my discussions with Rutherford, etc.

3. I fully agree, as did Rutherford when I discussed with him, as to importance of having firm ground under us in handling this delicate position. The Governor himself has to be satisfied under the section that Government of province cannot be carried [on] under provisions of Act before we can go into Section 93. Secondly, in normal way, even if the present Government were to go out, it would I think be only proper that Governor, given his Instrument of Instructions, should at any rate go through the form of looking round to see whether he could compose an alternative Government, and recourse to Section 93 would only normally be available to us if and when he finds that he could not do so.

4. What I had throughout contemplated was not so much dismissal or removal of Government as that it might be necessary for Central Government to impose requirements on Ministerial Government in Bengal of such a nature either (a) that no self respecting Government could or would carry on consistently with them since they would represent such an interference with that Government's responsibility for Government of Province and/or such reflection on its past record and (? present) capacity; or (b) that e.g. the Nazimuddin Government would lose its Hindu supporters and might no longer have requisite majority in the House. That might of course occur over regimenting of Calcutta Corporation as to which Hindu opinion in Bengal will undoubtedly be extremely sensitive. In those events and failing an alternative Government the Governor would then have no alternative but to go into Section 93 accompanying his proclamation, made with my approval (and yours), with a statement explaining circumstances which had brought about that result.

5. Position discussed in preceding paragraph is very much that which you had in mind in paragraphs No. 2 and 5 of your telegram. But I do not think I need examine technical position further since what I have said will make it clear to you that you and I are in complete agreement in our approach to this matter.

6. I discussed position exhaustively with Rutherford on 5th and 6th September including various methods of dealing with it. We both felt that first essential was for him to form on the spot his own appreciation of situation, of how best to deal with it, of adequate and best disposition of Governmental personnel, and of attitude and adequacy of his Ministers; and that nothing could properly or wisely be done until he had been able to do so. It is unfortunate that Bengal Assembly is due to meet on 14th September since if any extreme step were to prove necessary there would be advantage in its having been taken before Assembly meets. But we cannot rush matters and must take our chance over that. I have great confidence in Rutherford's strong personality, wide experience and energy. He has also the advantage as compared with Herbert of a thorough grasp of administrative position and set up; and while he is very direct he is tactful and I would expect him to be as good as anyone in carrying Ministers with him. Ministers themselves realise that they are very much under the spotlight. It is possible Rutherford may be able to get Province round the corner consistently with keeping his Ministers. If he does no one would be better pleased than I shall. But it is too early to reckon on that yet. I have asked him to let me have an appreciation as early as possible (? and will) let you have it as soon as I receive it.

7. Meanwhile I have been carefully watching reactions of my Council. Matter was again discussed in Council on 6th while Rutherford was still here. Asoka Roy again pressed for immediate move into Section 93. This produced violent

[1] No. 104. [2] No. 97.

protest from Usman who urged that turning out of a Moslem Ministry at Hindu dictation would be resented by every Moslem throughout country. It was obvious that my other colleagues were very much more sensitive to communal issue in this business than they had been a few days before.

8. My own judgment in the light of Council discussion was that we were likely to have greater trouble from communal point of view if we were to drive into Section 93 unless situation was handled with extreme care than I had judged likely a week ago. Position has been aggravated since then by open letter by Shyama Prasad Mookerjee to Rutherford urging that national Government be formed in Bengal in replacement of present Government which has failed, or (? failing) that, that responsibility for administration be taken over by the Governor. This comes ill from Mookerjee who with Huq bears a very heavy burden of responsibility for lack of foresight and energy, and interference with officials which lies I suspect at the bottom of present situation. But its general importance is of course the aggravation of communal aspect of the business which its represents.

9. Above will I trust give you the present picture. As regards paragraph No. 9 of your telegram there would of course be no question whatever of me authorising any extreme step in this matter without fullest prior consultation with you and Cabinet, and you may be certain of my anxiety to keep temperature as low as possible and to avoid any extreme action if we possibly can. Vital and essential thing is to restore position so far as (a) food; (b) efficient working of administration are concerned. But you need have no (? apprehension) of any precipitate action either by Rutherford or by myself.

110

Note by Mr Patrick

L/PO/6/108a: ff 96–7

Undated

Proposed invitation to Indian Political leaders to join Viceroy's Council

Some points are suggested which, if not already covered specifically in Lord Wavell's proposals,[1] might need examination before the proposals are put forward for consideration by H.M.G.

I. To whom would invitations issue and would these be invited as individuals or to nominate representatives of their Party?

Is it to be assumed that, apart from Depressed Classes and Sikhs already represented, Hindu Mahasabha as well as Congress and Muslim League leaders would

receive invitations? Would any other Party leaders besides (e.g. National Liberals, Socialists or Communists) receive invitations, and would the right to nominate a representative be extended to any or to all?

N.B. (a) In 1940 Lord Linlithgow consulted Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Jinnah before issuing the statement[2] of 8th August. After its issue he approached Maulana Kalam Azad who declined to meet him, and Mr. Moonji of Hindu Mahasabha who betrayed suspicion of the Muslim League. Mr. Aney of the Congress Nationalist Party, after consulting his Party and Mr. Ambedkar for Depressed Classes agreed to serve. A Sikh was also known to be willing. Mr. Jinnah obtained Lord Linlithgow's agreement to the party leaders concerned nominating their representatives. Lord Linlithgow rejected his further stipulations for equal League representation in Council with Congress should it come in, also that the terms of Congress admission to Council, if this occurred subsequently, should be subject to the League's agreement. Mr. Gandhi after a further infructuous interview announced Civil Disobedience.

(b) Sir S. Cripps discussed the draft declaration[3] of 1942 with representatives of Congress, Muslim League, Hindu Mahasabha, Depressed Classes and Sikhs among others. The question of their representation in Council was understood to be reserved to the Viceroy.

II. Would a request for enlargement of Congress detenus or persons undergoing sentence be accepted as a condition precedent to Congress consideration of an offer of participation?

It is understood that Congress leaders in detention would be given facilities to consult as between Mr. Gandhi and those at Ahmednagar. Would facilities be given to the Working Committee to extend their consultations to friends outside, including others in detention or imprisoned elsewhere? Would a meeting of A.–I.C.C. be permitted? If so what would happen to detenus or sentenced persons released for this purpose in the event of non-acceptance?

The unfavourable effect on certain classes of public opinion of having to refuse full facilities for consultation would presumably need to be weighed against the probable objections of Provincial Governments, on account of security risks and damage to their credit with their administrations, were detenus and prisoners enlarged without any *quid pro quo*.

III. To what extent would present Members of the Viceroy's Council be consulted upon the invitation?

It would be impossible to give Members of the Council cognisance of the proposal without arousing speculations about their individual future with consequent loss of solidarity if not of secrecy. But the Council's loyalty seems to have been severely strained by having been left out of Sir S. Cripps' consultations,

[1] See No. 108. [2] Vol. I, Appendix I. [3] Vol. I, No. 456.

whereas now as then their continued service may be needed. Possibly it may be feasible to consult the Members individually immediately before issue of the invitation, reminding each of the understanding on which he accepted office, that his appointment would be for no fixed term, but expressing reliance on his loyal co-operation in all circumstances.

IV. The form of the offer.

(a) It is understood that this would be such as to preclude the attachment of conditions, such as, e.g. the right to change a Party nominee when desired, to have parity of representation as between the Parties or between Hindu and Muslim, or to have a convention established limiting the power of the Viceroy in responsibility to H.M.G. and overriding the provisions of the Ninth Schedule to the Government of India Act.

(b) Would it be proposed to proceed on the basis of the definition of the respective functions of Defence and War departments attempted by Sir S. Cripps?[4] Would there be any attempt to define the field within which war requirements might override the collective policy of the Council? Or is it intended, in view of the potential comprehensive demand to be made by S.E.A. Command on the Indian administration, central and provincial, specifically to reserve to the Viceroy acting on behalf of H.M.G. to decide, in case of dispute, what are essential war requirements?

(c) Would there be any question of giving the reconstituted Council an increased control over the executive authority and legislative field of Provincial Governments? Would the Governor-General retain, independent of the Council, his discretionary powers of supervision over the exercise by Provincial Governors of special responsibilities or their administration under S. 93 where this continued? Or would the Council be allowed to offer advice on these subjects?

(d) Apart from stipulations about *working conditions*, it seems likely, having regard to what happened in 1940 and 1942, that Party Leaders might expect preliminary assurances about the form of the *future* constitution. Such assurances might, in contrary directions, be demanded by Hindu Mahasabha and the Muslim League respectively in regard to Pakistan and also about the option to Provinces under the Cripps Declaration to contract out. Congress might similarly stipulate for India's independence outside the British Commonwealth. Will it be possible to adhere to the standpoint that the present offer is wholly without prejudice to the future constitution?

V. Demands in Council inclusive of Political Leaders for interim constitutional concessions.

Assuming that the Council had been successfully reconstituted to include the Party leaders, would it be an understanding, at any rate of H.M.G. if not with

the Party Leaders themselves, that no relaxation of the Viceroy's present statutory power or of the control exercised by H.M.G., whether by amendment of the Act or by instituting a convention, could be expected so long as Indians had not agreed among themselves to adopt a new constitution and accepted consequential stipulations on the part of H.M.G.; and that in any case the present constitution would remain in being until the conclusion of hostilities with Japan?

Would it not be advantageous to make this generally known, if it is accepted, with a view to preventing disappointment if, on H.M.G.'s refusal to concede demands in the reconstituted Council, resignations follow and the composition has to be changed?

N.B. Jinnah might be counted on to resist any demand on the part of Congress that the Viceroy's power should be restricted if he could not count on an assured parity in Council with representatives of Congress. But he might well join with Congress in such demands if their fulfilment implied no risk that his Party would be dominated by a Hindu Raj.

VI. Question of preliminary soundings for terms of communal agreement before issue of invitations.

One suggestion occurs for paving the way towards the Viceroy's invitation. Presumably there will be an interval of some weeks or months after Lord Wavell's arrival, while he is mainly preoccupied with the organisation of the relations of the Government of India with the S.E.A. Command and with the economic situation, and is not ready to deal with the constitutional question. During this interval the Coupland Report, Part III,[5] will have appeared and perhaps have stimulated public discussion in India on means of breaking the deadlock. Would it not be useful for some more or less impartial person, who however stands to gain credit from a Hindu–Muslim pact, to use this interval to take unofficial soundings among Party Leaders available for consultation with a view to seeing if there is prospect of agreement about the proportionate representation in the Executive Council of Hindu and Muslims and of other minority Parties which would be generally acceptable. The pretext could well be that a new Viceroy might wish to consider renewal of paragraph (e) of the Cripps offer. Such an enquiry need not, if it fails to produce an agreed formula, prejudice any later effort by the Viceroy personally. It is suggested that an Indian Prince (e.g. Bhopal) might be the most suitable person to undertake it. He might, however, need expert drafting assistance.

P. J. P.

[4] See Vol. I, No. 574. [5] See No. 103, note 2.

III

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/14

SECRET THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *13 September 1943*

No. 22/H.E.

In your letter of the 16th May 1941[1] you sent me a very useful and interesting note about the future of the States, drawn up by the India Office, and designed to assist over possible future constitutional developments in their bearing on the States, and to suggest conceivable ways of helping Rulers to adapt themselves to the new conditions which might emerge. You made it clear that the note did not profess to break any new ground, and you added, which was of course entirely correct, that a great deal of the subject-matter was implicit in or suggested by correspondence which had at that date already passed between us. And you suggested that while no very elaborate answer might be called for, it would be of use to you to know whether in my view and that of my Advisers the note contained any misconceptions or misunderstandings. The note, for which I should like to thank you and your officials, was to me most interesting. The importance of the points covered by it was also manifest, and I was at pains to examine it in detail with my various Advisers here. The matter was not one of urgency; nor, in its nature, were the issues of such a character that they could wisely have been disposed of without mature consideration. I had, however, at the end of 1941 reached certain conclusions of my own in the light of very detailed noting by the Political and the Reforms Departments here, which I had been proposing to communicate to you.

2. As you will remember, early in 1942 the general constitutional issue again came under active scrutiny. The result of the considerable correspondence which took place between us early in the spring was the announcement in March 1942[2] of the despatch of Sir Stafford Cripps to represent the Cabinet in constitutional discussions out here, and on the basis of the declaration which the Cabinet had approved. It was clearly useless in such circumstances to trouble you with comment on your letter and note of May 1941, given the uncertainty as to what the outcome of the Cripps discussions might be, and the certainty that whether they succeeded, as we then trusted that they might, or whether, as proved to be the case, they were a failure, the States position would again require scrutiny in the light of such events as might have happened.

3. The Mission, as you know, did not achieve its objects. But one result of the discussion[3] which took place during Sir Stafford Cripps' visit here between him and the Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes, and other representatives

of the Indian States, was to raise in the minds of the States doubts as to the attitude and policy of His Majesty's Government as expounded by Sir Stafford Cripps, whether during his visit to India or on the floor of the House of Commons. Those doubts resulted in the representations made by His Highness the Jam Sahib in his capacity as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes in his secret letter of 1st June 1942.[4] The reply to be given to that very important document was the subject of prolonged and close discussion[5] between us, and the answer sent to His late Highness of Bikaner on 4th January 1943,[6] and simultaneously communicated to His Highness the Chancellor, who was then in London, represented our considered view. Those discussions and the reply to the Jam Sahib's letter cover a good deal of the ground referred to in the note appended to your letter of 16th May 1941. But I think that there will be advantage, at the point that has now been reached, and particularly as you will no doubt be discussing these various States issues with the Viceroy-designate, in my sending you a reply to your letter of May 1941 which shall give you my own judgment, before I hand over, of the very broad general position taken in your note of 1941 in the light of the significant and important developments that have happened since in the political field, and in particular of the discussions between the Princes and Sir Stafford Cripps, and of the reply that we have sent to the Jam Sahib's representations.

4. Your memorandum of May 1941 did indeed, as you suggest, touch indirectly (and I recognise that it would hardly have been possible to avoid doing so in a matter such as the present) on the implications of our constitutional policy from the point of view of the States. But I think it is fair to say that it concentrated on the three points set out in the last paragraph of the India Office note, viz.:—

(*a*) That it is more than doubtful whether the general body of States Darbars (apart from the very few more powerful Darbars) are sufficiently equipped to maintain themselves against subversive activities, or successfully to negotiate for a firm footing in a new Indian structure, without the help of Britain, on which they have for so long relied.

(*b*) That such help cannot be counted upon indefinitely, at any rate in the form and degree in which it has previously been given.

(*c*) That though the existing situation may not justify any open reorientation of policy towards the States, and there is at any rate no need to create a

[1] L/P&S/13/889: ff 63–72.
[2] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 378, 11 March 1942, cols. 1069–70; see Vol. I, Nos. 308 and 309.
[3] See Vol. I, Nos. 386, 410, 414, 437–9, 450, 464, 498, 515, 527–8 and 591–6.
[4] Vol. II, No. 115.
[5] For this discussion see Chapter 6 of the Summary of Documents in Vols. II and III.
[6] See Vol. III, No. 309, note 4.

deadlock by talk of repudiating past pledges, the following line of policy seemed worth pursuing:—

(*i*) To intensify pressure on small States to group for the improvement of their administration, encouraging them by grants-in-aid or loans if this is practicable.

(*ii*) To refrain from any new pronouncements stressing the sanctity of States' rights, and to impress upon Darbars, where occasion offers, the need for them to adjust themselves to claiming recognition, on their merits, by British India, of the privileges which they seek to retain.

5. I do not propose to trouble you with a detailed examination of the arguments for and against these various propositions, and I think that while they do involve consideration on our part of what the likely line of progress for the solution of the States problem may be, and consideration also of the problem of the relation of the States to constitutional changes for India, they can be dealt with without projecting ourselves too far into the constitutional or other future. I discuss below certain aspects of these wider problems.

6. So far as your specific propositions are concerned, I should be prepared very broadly to accept the validity of point (*a*) in paragraph 4 above. I think it fair at the same time to suggest, though I do not propose to elaborate that point in my present letter, that while we normally use the term "the States" as representing the Princely Order generally, we ought to bear in mind in doing so the very marked categories into which "the States" in fact fall. There are the larger States which (following the line taken in Clause 5 of the Act of 1935, and Part II of Schedule I to that Act) are probably those really competent to negotiate for a firm footing in a new Indian structure with the help of Britain (to use your own phrase). There is the intermediate category which may, a good many of them, be able either from their present resources or as a result of the development of the material resources available to them, to maintain a sufficiently high standard of administration to reach reasonable requirements. Finally, there is the great mass of smaller States or estates which certainly can never be of any importance that matters in connection with the settlement of major problems, and which, unless they are prepared to work together and make certain surrenders, are equally unlikely, for financial reasons, and because of the shortage of personnel of sufficient experience in general administration, to be able to come up to the standards which we feel bound to set now-a-days. I think you will agree with me as to the validity of this comment, and very many, if not all, of the generalisations in my present letter about Indian States fall to be read in the light of the consciousness of both of us that the great bulk of them are likely to be true in fact only of units which are capable of supporting an administration.

7. As regards point (*b*), I should also be prepared, subject to what follows in this letter, to accept its validity, though with the very important reservation that the collapse of the Cripps negotiations, and the apparent deadlock which has been reached in British Indian politics, may, if carried forward into the postwar period, necessitate a reconsideration of our approach to the whole Indian constitutional problem and the whole question of our relation to India, and that it would be well to refrain from committing ourselves too definitely at this stage as to what may or may not be likely to be practicable in such circumstances. I would however emphatically agree that it would be undesirable in the highest degree to make any suggestion that we contemplate the repudiation of past pledges. It will be clear to you from the recent representations of the Chancellor, arising out of the Cripps discussions, how keenly the Princes feel on this matter, and how little prospect there is of His Majesty's Government being allowed in any circumstances, even should they desire to do so, to repudiate their engagements or to secure release from their obligations to the States, save as the result of long and careful negotiation. You and I are familiar with the objections of a general nature that can be seen in any circumstances, and particularly in the circumstances of India, to any suggestion that His Majesty's Government are prepared, save in circumstances of a wholly peculiar character, to contemplate unilateral denunciation of engagements freely entered into by them, and for which they have received and given consideration. I do not think it necessary to amplify this point, for we are, as I see it, in agreement about it. I would only add that while matters have advanced considerably in this field since your note of 1941 was written, and while the difficulty of any evasion of past pledges is even clearer now than it was then, I would then, as I do now, have agreed that to refrain from any suggestion that past pledges might have to be reconsidered would be in itself, in my judgement, a very substantial negative commitment.

8. As regards the first section of the third point referred to in paragraph 4 above, I am as you know in complete agreement with you as to the desirability of maintaining pressure on small States to group themselves for the improvement of their administration. You and I both fully realise the difficulty of the political and administrative problems which arise in connection with the grouping of States for the purpose of improving their administrations. And while there can be no doubt whatever that substantial administrative advance of the type which we are so anxious to secure can be secured by co-operative measures, particularly among the smaller States, I suspect, too, that we should be unwise to expect too much from this plan, and unwise, in particular, to regard it, at any rate until it has been proved by practical trial over a longer period, as a final solution of the problem of the petty Indian States. The task of maintaining pressure on small States to group themselves for the improvement

of their administration is, as experience has shown, a very heavy one, and given the factors to be considered, progress is likely, I fear, to be slower than either you or I could wish. Consideration has to be given to a variety of susceptibilities—susceptibilities with which one may sometimes be forgiven for feeling some impatience. The matter is further complicated by the fact that while the Chamber of Princes, or major Rulers not themselves directly affected, are prepared to pay lip service to the principle of coercion in the case of these smaller entities, they are alive to the implications of the principle involved from their own point of view, and, possibly for that reason, possibly because of a general feeling of States' solidarity, they are inclined when it comes to the point of business to give us in practice less help than one could have hoped for.

9. On a very important aspect of the issue discussed in the preceding paragraph, I must frankly say that (as I have indicated at various times in our personal correspondence) the difficulties in the way of grants-in-aid or loans, attractive as that proposition might at first sight appear to be, are in my judgment insuperable. I do not indeed believe that we can look to make any advance by endeavouring to apply this solution. Grants-in-aid or loans raise questions of control, and very detailed control. There is the question of the source from which these monies are to be found, and the connected question of the interest which the source of those funds may naturally be expected to take, both in the policy in the pursuance of which they are being applied, and in the detailed manner of their application. We could, in my judgment, look for little thanks (not that that is a material consideration) and, more important, little welcome, from States (and I repeat that the definition of that term is, as I suggested in paragraph 6 above, of great importance, and that clearly what we must in this connection consider are States really entitled to that name) for a proposal to finance them, if that proposal was accompanied, as in my judgment it should be, by the safeguards for the application of the monies affected, which would be essential in the interest of the taxpayer, whether British or Indian, on whom it fell to provide them.

10. As regards the second proposition referred to in paragraph 4 (*c*) above, matters have now moved some distance, as the result of the Cripps discussions, since your note of 1941 was written. We discussed this matter in some detail in connection with the reply to be given to the Jam Sahib's letter of 1st June 1942. As you will remember, the statement you yourself made on 3rd December 1942,[7] to which reference was made in the reply to the Chancellor's letter, stated in terms that the Indian Princes may rest assured that the fulfilment of the fundamental obligations arising out of their treaties and sanads remains an integral part of the policy of His Majesty's Government, and that the absence of specific mention thereof in the draft declaration carried to India by Sir Stafford Cripps had no significance. I felt, as I think you felt also, that we had

no option but to give the reaffirmation in question. But I am wholly with you in thinking that, so far as circumstances make it possible for us to avoid such reaffirmation without giving rise to misunderstanding on the part of the States (and complete silence may on occasion be misunderstood—a point I shall have to consider in connection with my farewell address to the Chamber of Princes next month), there is much to be said for refraining from adding to our existing commitments even by reiteration of our acceptance of them. I agree also that we might as a matter of policy continue to impress discreetly on the States at every convenient opportunity the fact that close attention is now concentrated on them in India, in the United Kingdom, in the United States, and elsewhere in the United Nations, to a degree that has not been the case in the past; and that, for good or for ill, the world is taking a turn in which the Indian States will have to justify themselves to a greater degree than in the past, and in which the defence of mal-administration, or of gross personal extravagance and the like, will be increasingly difficult.

11. Before I pass from the specific propositions raised by your note of 1941, I would add, with reference to paragraph 8 above, that the measures designed to ensure that all the States shall be so governed, as not only to place them beyond reasonable criticism in Parliament or elsewhere, but to remove reasonable objection to or criticism of their inclusion as units of a self-governing Dominion, if such a stage is reached and the States are participants in such a Dominion, may be regarded as essentially an extension and an intensification of the measures which have in recent years been pressed increasingly upon States throughout this country. There is no occasion to specify those measures in great detail in a letter such as the present. But the main heads may be recapitulated as—

(*a*) Provision for adequate machinery to enable States' subjects to bring their grievances and aspirations to notice.
(*b*) Elimination of personal extravagance and restriction of expenditure on the Ruling family within the limits of a reasonable Civil list.
(*c*) Increasing insistence on the employment of "lent officers" to overhaul and modernise corrupt and inefficient administration.
(*d*) Insistence on the punctual publication of administrative reports compiled so as to give full and accurate information of administration and financial conditions.
(*e*) The review of revenue arrangements with a view to securing full proprietary rights or, at any rate, stability of tenure for cultivators.
(*f*) Measures to ensure stability and independence for the higher Judiciary and also for Civil establishments in general, and

7 *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 385, cols. 1281–2; see Vol. III, No. 290, Annexure C.

(*g*) Establishment of "Council Government" with a view to eliminating the waywardness which is so often an element in purely personal rule and to securing the continuation of improvements introduced during periods of minority administration. (I would qualify under this head by the observation that, in face of many signs that constitutional change in British India is likely to be slower than some of us at one time thought probable, we must be very careful not to push the States along at a pace faster than is appropriate to the rate of development in British India. That, however, relates much more to internal political and constitutional advance in States than to the merger, if that be the right word, of small States, or the co-operation of a number of States for common purposes.)

12. In addition, there are, of course, in regard to the smaller States, (in which connection please again see the comments in paragraph 6 above), whose resources are considered inadequate for the provision of the administrative and other amenities essential to modern conditions, the suggestions for grouping and co-operation to which I have already referred. Those are suggestions which I have myself continuously and emphatically recommended, and which the local Political Authorities have been instructed to further to the utmost degree practicable during these last five or six years. These measures, and the other measures which I have enumerated as (*a*) to (*g*) in the preceding paragraph, are all of them important. All of them represent a settled policy—a policy which I have been most anxious to consolidate during my Viceroyalty, and in which I have taken the closest personal interest throughout. I regret only that, despite the pressure which I have brought to bear over the last seven years, no more should as yet have emerged in the way of practical results. I think, however, that I may fairly say, without any suggestion of criticism, or risk of misunderstanding on your part, that while the Secretary of State of the day and I have always been in agreement as to the desirability of our taking a fairly strong line with Rulers in certain of these matters, I have not infrequently been urged by the Secretary of State when it has come to the point to consider the possible reactions of a particular course of action on the Chamber of Princes or the like. You will remember that that was the case at certain stages of the handling of the Kolhapur Succession,[8] and more recently in connection with my endeavours to bring some pressure to bear on the late Maharao of Cutch.[9] I do not, I repeat, refer to that point in any way in a critical spirit, for I have always known your anxiety and that of the India Office to lend all the help, and give all the wise advice possible in matters of this nature. But it does illustrate again that this business is not so simple as it seems, and that quite apart from any local difficulties, there may be wider difficulties of policy which will, from time to time, be more apparent here, or more apparent to the Secretary of State, as the case may be, but the existence of which will necessitate a somewhat more cautious and

even dilatory approach to a particular problem or set of problems, or a particular Ruler or group of Rulers, than either the Secretary of State or the Viceroy of the day could wish to be the case.

13. I do not propose to discuss save in the most general way in my present letter the question of the relation of the States to the future constitutional arrangements for India. In the reply sent to the Jam Sahib's letter of 1st June 1942 we did indeed deal with certain specific suggestions or criticisms advanced in that letter. But the correspondence which passed between us at the time covered the broad issue of the position of the Princes in regard to any solution that might emerge for the Indian problem in sufficient detail to make it unnecessary for me to amplify here. Let me however put on record one or two observations based on my long and close association with the handling of this problem, first in connection with the work of the Joint Select Committee and the framing of the Act of 1935, secondly, during the time that I have held my present office—a time during which so many issues of the first importance have come under consideration either with the Secretary of State of the day, as representing His Majesty's Government; or in India with the Chancellor or with other leading members of the Princely body.

14. I would in the first place like to record my strong sense of the very great political difficulties likely to be involved in any really marked attempt at the coercion of the Princes. Their Highnesses are not always long-sighted. Nor do they always identify with precision the course likely on a long view to be in the best interests of themselves and of their dynasties. We are only too well aware that internal conditions in many States leave something, in some cases perhaps much, to be desired. Levels of administration vary very greatly, and there is much that could be said to the detriment of the Indian States by critics desirous of doing them damage with the public. But I need not recall to you the anxiety, at the time of the passing of the Act of 1935 and thereafter, which so definitely manifested itself in most important political quarters at home, against any coercion, or the bringing of any undue degree of pressure, on the Princes to accept even the very moderate and carefully balanced arrangements involved in the federal scheme. Indeed, had it not been for the impossibility for political reasons of our definitely indicating to the Princes that it was the wish of His Majesty's Government, and their advice, that they should accept without undue argument the federal scheme as set out in the Act, we might very well have been able to secure federation. As it was, we had to leave Their Highnesses to their own decision; and the Princes, who had something to lose by finally committing themselves, and who may have been excused for doubting, given

[8] Of 1942. L/P&S/13/1100.

[9] In an attempt, during 1941, to secure the Maharao's agreement to the appointment of an independent Dewan whose advice he would act on in all matters. L/P&S/13/1467.

the then trend of politics in British India, whether they really had a very great deal to gain by coming into a federal scheme which would have associated them so much more closely with British India, had little inducement to move rapidly in that direction. Indeed the very fact that we were not prepared to give them definite advice of the type which they were accustomed to receive, and to let them know that it was our wish that they should enter the federal scheme, may well have left them in some doubt as to whether we were ourselves wholly convinced of its merits.

15. I do not believe, though I may be wrong, that our successors will find it much more easy to force the Princes to come against their will into any constitutional scheme that may be devised in future than it has been in the past, or that public opinion at home will be very much more ready than previously to support His Majesty's Government in adopting such an attitude. The reluctance of public opinion to support strong pressure on, or coercion of the Princes, would be likely, if anything, to be increased by the consciousness of the immense contribution which Their Highnesses and their States have made to the war effort; by the wholehearted and sincere support which they have lent to the prosecution of the war; and by the contrast between their attitude and that of the major parties in British India.

16. Nor ought we to overlook in settling future policy the value which the Princes and their States represent, even when full account is taken of the many weaknesses, and the many directions in which substantial improvement is most earnestly to be desired, as a conservative and reliable element in Indian polity. We have a very clear duty to India as a whole; and we must endeavour to discharge our duty as best we can. But the arguments that always exist against abandoning or insufficiently protecting the interests of those who have proved themselves our friends and our loyal supporters would be strengthened, still further, if possible, if in the light of experience we should find ourselves, however reluctantly, driven to entertain doubts as to the goodwill, or the capacity to govern, of some or all of the elements to which it might fall to enjoy the power which we have been, and are, so anxious to transfer from the control of His Majesty's Government to that of Indians themselves.

17. It is too early yet in my judgment, to estimate how matters are likely to go in the post-war constitutional discussions which are envisaged by His Majesty's Government. And until we are more certain, first, that we can hope to get those discussions going with a reasonable degree of general co-operation by the major parties and interests in British India; secondly, that a solution commanding reasonably general agreement as affecting British India in the first place, and equally the Indian States, is likely to emerge, we shall in my view do well to refrain from committing ourselves unduly on the question of the

future of the States in relation to the new Indian constitutional scheme. We must for all that continue to consider the question of how to reconcile their existence and their legitimate claims with the various forms of constitutional schemes that may admit of being devised. But we should in my opinion concentrate rather on the general improvement of standards of administration, the elimination of abuses, the encouragement of Their Highnesses to adapt their States and their governments to more modern conditions, and to protect themselves against attacks from British India or from the press in the United Kingdom and the United States by the removal of the causes of offence. By action on those lines we shall unquestionably be preparing the ground, and that in the most effective way possible, for that closer association of the States and of British India in a single constitutional scheme which we have been so anxious to bring about. And, just as it has always been our feeling that the Indian States would make a contribution of their own in terms of history, tradition, and general stability, to the success of any such unified scheme, so the valuable contribution that they will make, if our ambitions are realised, will be most materially increased if the level of administration, of personal conduct, and of interest in matters of general concern, has been sufficiently raised in the Indian States at the time when any such development takes place. I see every advantage in action on these lines. But I remain of opinion that so far as the major constitutional scheme is concerned, it would be unwise in the highest degree to do anything in present conditions likely seriously to antagonise the more important Rulers and that it should be our endeavour, by strong and authoritative advice, to try to carry them with us.

112

Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/78

CONFIDENTIAL

NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE GOVERNOR'S REPORT NO. 17, DATED 13TH SEPTEMBER 1943

3. There was one incident during the Session which might have led to a rift in the ranks of the Ministry, when Khan Bahadur Sadullah Khan, at the prompting of Mehr Chand Khanna, tried to initiate a debate on Pakistan; this was, however, tactfully dealt with by Aurangzeb without antagonising the Sikhs. There are indications, however, that the Pakistan question will sooner or later be brought into the forefront by the more enthusiastic Leaguers and,

indeed, the Peshawar City element are contemplating holding a conference to which Mr. Jinnah might possibly be invited. They will certainly not, however, do this until after the Sikh bye-election has been held. Ex-Nawab Bahadur Yar Jung, of Hyderabad State, was the chief speaker at a large Muslim League meeting in the City a week or two ago.

113

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/14

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *14 September 1943*

No. 23-H.E./43.

I have studied with great interest the note on "A social and economic policy for India"[1] prepared by the Minister of Labour and the Minister of Aircraft Production. My comments below are personal and at this stage I have only consulted one Governor,[2] one of the Members of my Council,[3] and one or two officials.[4] I do not propose to discuss individual subjects, such as education, agriculture, public health, &c., in much detail. I think I may claim some knowledge of these subjects, but the essential proposal is to prepare and launch at once a great drive, inspired by the Centre, for the raising of India's social and economic standards; and it is the implications of this broad proposal, especially in its short-term aspect as a proposal for immediate action, that I must examine. You will find that many of my comments more or less repeat your own views as expressed in your most illuminating note on the subject.[5]

2. That there is an immense amount to be done is admitted. This is common ground. It is also I hope common ground that a very great deal has been achieved in the past. Much of the Indian scene has been transformed during the period of British rule, and however much there may remain to do we shall be guilty of great disservice to Britain and indeed to India if we present any scheme in such a way as to imply that we admit or apologise for any misconduct by us of India's affairs.

3. The constitutional position, familiar though it may be, needs stressing. Agriculture, education, public health, irrigation and to a large extent industries are provincial subjects. Ministries would certainly not be prepared to accept dictation by the Centre on these subjects and advice of a radical kind involving enormous expenditure would inevitably go unheeded. Although certain Provinces are at present under the direct administration of the Governors concerned, it does not follow that sweeping changes of policy should be dictated to such Provinces; they may revert at any time to Ministerial Government, and

the planning involved is long-term planning requiring some reasonable certainty of continuity of development. Equally, while the Central Government remains under Parliamentary control, it is now predominantly non-official in composition, and likely to be sensitive in the extreme over any endeavour to dictate a policy from home in financial or social matters. Again the distribution of financial resources between the Centre and the Provinces makes the latter mainly dependent on land revenue while the centre looks to income-tax and customs. Thus if the Centre by expenditure of huge sums could raise the standard of living and so the taxable capacity of the villages the return on its expenditure would tend to go to the Provinces rather than the Centre. Central Income-tax is not paid on agricultural incomes.

4. There is a further complication that primary education, which is perhaps the most important subject of all, is in the hands not of the Centre, or even of Provincial Governments, but of local bodies, such as district boards and municipalities. In fact one comes back again and again to the suggestion that a major campaign of the sort contemplated can only be prosecuted by totalitarian methods such as have been used in Russia and Turkey, methods which are out of the question in India at present.

5. It will be useless attempting anything in the nature of a 5-years plan without the goodwill and active help of Indian political parties and especially of Indian Provincial Legislatures. These Legislatures tend to be obsessed with politics. A large proportion of the members, even when they represent rural constituencies, are urban-minded and forgetful or ignorant of the true needs of the countryside. In so far as they are responsive to the opinion of rural voters, that opinion is directly opposed to social reform. There is appalling ignorance and deep conservatism to defeat before this condition can be changed. Social and religious feeling is generally against reform and the rural voter is reasonably content with a government that will reduce or at least refrain from enhancing the taxes he pays. The most certain way of rousing him to active opposition is to impose new or raise old taxes; and heavier taxation is of course an essential preliminary to any large scheme of reform. Although the price of wheat is three or four times what it was before the war Provincial Governments under Ministerial control cannot be persuaded to raise the land revenue in order to take advantage of this temporary prosperity. In Sind the Governor recently[6] had to intervene in order to secure a reasonable level of taxation on the lands of the new Sukkur Barrage. Even as it was his Ministers flatly declined to agree to the enhancements proposed where they were constitutionally competent to

[1] i.e. Enclosure to No. 276 in Vol. III; see also No. 574 in that Vol.
[2] Sir H. Twynam; see Nos. 52 and 60. [3] Sir J. Raisman; see No. 52, note 5.
[4] Presumably Lt.-Gen. Sir T. Hutton and Mr T. Gregory; see *ibid.*
[5] Enclosure to No. 356 in Vol. III. [6] See also No. 35, para. 11 and No. 53, para. 16.

do so. But for the Governor's intervention the Ministry would cheerfully have forgone an increase of Rs. 2 crores per year in their meagre revenues. In the Punjab the Ministry resolutely refuse even to consider the possibility of tapping the immense new wealth accruing to the landlords and tenants as a result of the very high prices of wheat and cotton.

6. Thus although there has been some progress under Ministries within the limitations of their existing revenues and thanks to a windfall in the form of greatly increased war-time receipts through the Centre on account of income-tax, there is frankly no prospect of achieving in the Ministerial Provinces what the memorandum envisages. In all Ministerial Provinces the risk of bringing down the Ministry and of having to govern under the breakdown provisions of the Act has at all times to be weighed and any taxation in the Section 93 Provinces which was out of all relation to that imposed in Ministerial Provinces would cause great dissatisfaction and is considered at present to be out of the question.

7. Most of the expenditure that would be involved in such a campaign would be recurring. Lump sum grants would only tend to raise hopes that would later be disappointed and to start schemes that could not be maintained. I take it that a grant by His Majesty's Government is now out of the question and I do not dispute this. Our sterling balances are already embarrassing and any grant would have to be immense to be effective. Indeed the figures of expenditure for an all-India drive would be astronomical. I notice that in England the revised proposals for education as put forward by the President of the Board of Education involve an increase in expenditure from public funds of about 50 per cent.[7] Here my Educational Adviser estimates that educational reform on a "new-deal" basis would ultimately cost 280 crores per annum net expenditure from public funds as against the present net expenditure of 18 crores, an increase of over 1,400 per cent. Nor, with the present constitution, could the Centre hope to secure even a moderate measure of control of such expenditure if financed by it.

8. We are already encouraging savings and have recently started a great drive to this end. We have also greatly increased Central taxation. But we could not at this stage mortgage the future of the Government of India by financing from loans huge recurring expenditure that was properly the business of the Provinces; and expenditure of this type whether by the Centre or the Provinces will not bring large immediate returns in enhanced yields from taxation. Moreover it would be very dangerous to forget how brittle and precarious are Indian revenues, past, present and future. We remain, perforce, speculators in the monsoon.

9. I will now turn to one or two incidental suggestions made in the note. Such opinion as I have consulted is unanimous that an investigation into

problems of population with inevitable discussion of birth-control would be a dangerous experiment. It would I suspect politically be a highly controversial issue even at home. It would be infinitely more dangerous and controversial here. You may be interested in some apposite comments by the Abbé Dubois to which my attention has been drawn.[8] These were written at the beginning of the last century, but I am advised that they are just as apposite today. I attach extracts as an appendix to this letter. Although in some circles there is a willingness to discuss and even practise birth-control, the great majority of Indians whether Hindu or Mohammadan would regard the subject with abhorrence. Religious susceptibilities would be aroused and there might well be serious communal trouble. With so many seeking for an opportunity to embarrass government and inflame popular feeling, any such investigation should certainly be postponed.

10. I think it possible that something might be done after the war to strengthen the Central educational authority but we have already revived the Central Advisory Board, and the whole future of the Indian educational system has been under prolonged investigation, as the India Office memorandum[9] shows. I would not like to pronounce a final verdict on this point. I doubt real progress being made without British experts—the results so far of Indianisation are far from encouraging, and the communal issue runs deep. Yet we shall I think be wise to avoid any suggestion of too great an influx of British experts if we are not to arouse political and competitive jealousies and oppositions here. I hope that in some cases Indians will themselves express a desire for such experts. But the nationalist urge has to be reckoned with. The alternative system, although it is less effective, of sending Indians to the United Kingdom and elsewhere for training will be far more in accordance with the Indian ideas. Yet it will not be easy in our crowded post-war Universities to find as many places as will be needed, the level of the material will be low in most cases, and the Indian student in the United Kingdom presents many thorny problems.

11. It is generally admitted that given the money much could be done by modern propaganda methods in the field of education and I think that there would be a lot to be said for sending an Educational Mission to Russia and Turkey after the war. Nevertheless results could not be achieved in India at present by the totalitarian methods which have been adopted there. For instance co-education in the early primary stages is essential if wide-spread reform is to be carried out, but we cannot altogether ignore the strong and

7 In the White Paper on *Educational Reconstruction* (Cmd. 6458) published on 16 July 1943, the Board of Education estimated its proposed reforms would increase expenditure on education from £123m to £190m.

8 By Sir H. Twynam in a letter dated 8 August 1943. MSS. EUR. F. 125/64.

9 See No. 114, note 1, in Vol. III.

unreasonable objections to it which are held by so many. These objections are the more important because they are partly based on religious grounds.

12. In so far as the scheme relates to agriculture and village uplift there is much that I could say but I will be brief. The Imperial Council of Agricultural Research has done great work in my time and agricultural research in the Punjab alone has been worth crores of rupees. Interest in cattle-breeding is steadily increasing and results in this field have been notable. Our post-war plans are specially directed towards agriculture and the Reconstruction Committee of Council is in touch with all Provinces. A Public Health Commission has just been appointed. In all these fields there is immense scope for steady development but I am quite convinced that the mere expenditure of large sums of money would not necessarily benefit permanently the rural population. If expenditure went ahead of careful education it would pauperise the cultivator. What is wanted most of all is the spirit of self-help and thrift. For instance an immense amount could be achieved by the free labour of villagers if they would combine voluntarily, or could be compelled by law, to work for their common benefit on roads, &c. in the slack seasons. But Grigg will remember the difficulty we had in securing this when a grant was made to the Provinces for rural development in 1936–37. This is the type of legislation which no Ministry will touch at present, and the great promise of the co-operative movement has to a large extent been falsified because official guidance has been prematurely removed, and societies for various purposes have been instituted more rapidly than the spirit of self-help and thrift could be taught.

13. For labour in the towns there is much, I will not deny, that needs to be done. The problem is far from easy owing to a primitive society and to lack of funds. As industry develops after the war it will be a prime duty of the Government of India and of provincial governments to initiate further reforms. You are aware of Central legislation in the last two years to promote the health and safety of workers, maternity benefits and weekly holidays. Minimum wage legislation and a limited scheme of unemployment insurance are under consideration, and schemes for sickness insurance and employment exchanges have reached an advanced stage of preparation. All Provinces have their own factory inspectorates and the Government of India besides using its influence to get these strengthened will put forward proposals for the training of welfare officers for appointment in all the larger industrial concerns. Housing and poor law schemes are more difficult and expensive but will have to be closely considered in the post-war period.

14. The war has of course seen a vast expansion of India's industries and as the note points out there will be need of extensive planning in order to gain the full benefit in the post-war period. As you know, I created recently a separate

department of Industries and Civil Supplies and this department will be responsible for industrial development after the war as well as for preliminary planning. In order to obtain adequate material for the Reconstruction Committee of Council to work on, the department is approaching industries with a definite questionnaire in order to ascertain their needs and opinion. The questionnaire suggested will go both to the specified industries and to industrial and commercial organisations. I am speeding up the collection of this material as far as possible. But there is a formidable amount of work to be carried out in the field of planning and it is possible in view of the size of the country and its scattered resources that planning will have to be on a zonal rather than on an all-India basis.

15. We recognise the possibilities of the post-war period and the importance of being ready for it. The great sterling balances in the United Kingdom although they cannot be made available for use in India by conversion into rupees will be available gradually to import into India machinery and equipment which will transform the industrial life of the country. This in its turn will, if adequate markets can be found or created, increase the revenues from Central taxes and open up new possibilities of reform. At the same time there will be very large sums of earmarked money to be spent in all those areas from which substantial numbers of recruits have come for the benefit of returned soldiers, and it is probable that for a year or two most of the technical advice and assistance we can provide from the Centre in the agricultural and educational fields will be fully extended in making a success of such schemes. Our experience in this connection will give us very valuable information for use on a wider scale later. The scope for improvement in roads and communications generally, and for the development of minor irrigation schemes, is recognised, and the attention of the Provinces has been drawn to it. Whereas Central finances have been hard hit by war expenditure some of the Provinces will be in a position to go ahead cautiously with such schemes in addition to schemes intended specially for the benefit of returned soldiers. The preparation of plans and the business of stimulating Provincial effort has been for many months in the hands of the Reconstruction Committee of Council.

16. I shall try to show below that it is quite beyond our resources to begin to implement the scheme under consideration during the war. Even after the war a sudden strong impulse from His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy will be politically suspect, especially at a moment when further constitutional changes are in the air. I have already spoken of the attitude of Provincial Legislatures. The general public and the press also will be deeply suspicious of any spectacular initiative by His Majesty's Government or the Government of India. We shall, I am quite sure, gain no political kudos in India from any such move. In fact the reverse will undoubtedly be the case. The project will be

taken as evidence of a decision to hold on to India in spite of our promises and as a planned distraction to keep Indian minds off constitutional reform. In view of the inevitable misinterpretation of our actions in India we may well be misunderstood even by the world outside. I think I should draw especial attention to this important aspect of these proposals from which in the political sphere His Majesty's Government stand unquestionably to lose, not to gain. All opinion at my disposal is strong and unanimous in this matter.

17. But even if there were the most alluring political advantages in sight we could not go ahead now. The proposals relate to the immediate war-time future and I do not think that anyone fully conversant with present conditions in India would suggest that there is the remotest possibility of beginning to implement them now. We are fighting inflation and must cut down ruthlessly all unnecessary Government expenditure. We have been compelled to close down as far as possible on all new construction work and all unnecessary use of labour, which in many areas is a scarce commodity. We could not build schools or construct roads or even provide extra school books in present conditions. Our transportation system is so strained that we could not undertake any project which involved movement of any additional materials by road or rail.

18. Our technical staff has been very greatly depleted by war demands. Almost all our I.M.S. doctors have gone from the Provinces. We are short of public health experts, engineers and many others who would be needed for a spectacular scheme like that envisaged in the note. Our administrative staff, which, as one adviser has put it, is scarcely enough even in peace-time for more than "care and maintenance" purposes, is now spread lamentably thin, and individuals are strained to the limit. Indianisation and the Provincial spirit have beyond question resulted in a lowering of quality, and the process will be cumulative. The district officer, whose work was in all conscience hard enough in peace-time, is now compelled to add to his responsibilities those of food procurement, Air Raid Precautions and Civil Defence, rationing and distribution, apart from many other war-time duties. The Government of India has inevitably drawn on the Provinces to an extent far greater than was ever intended when the cadres for the all-India Services were fixed, and the Provinces have had to replace their men with officers of Provincial services. The effect of this has been felt right down to the subordinate services and there is an acute shortage of man-power everywhere in the administrative as in the technical field.

19. There are thus unanswerable reasons why we can do nothing spectacular during the war and I am sure that the force of these reasons will be accepted. Because of them and because it would inevitably be welcomed as an opportunity for the most virulent anti-government propaganda I am bound to advise against the holding of an International Labour Office Conference in India this autumn.

20. It follows also that I cannot conscientiously recommend the issue of instructions to the new Viceroy on the lines suggested. If he tried to implement them he would merely be beating the air, and it would hardly be fair to him to charge him at the beginning of his Viceroyalty with a mission that could not but arouse bitter misunderstandings, cut clean across our war effort, and in the outcome almost certainly fail in its objects.

21. As regards your own suggestion that a centre of Indian and Oriental culture should be created in London in order, as you say, to remove a glaring deficiency and to deprive our critics and enemies of a handle against us, I think there is every reason to go ahead with the examination of this proposal. I do not know what you intend as regards finance, but I shall be most interested to hear what is suggested by the small committee which you propose to set up.

22. The more I have thought over this stimulating note prepared by Bevin and Stafford Cripps the more I have become convinced that the case against any immediate action on the lines suggested is quite conclusive. I trust my comments will not be taken to show any lack of sympathy. Viceroy after Viceroy has laboured to improve the standard of living in India and I hope I may claim to have kept up the tradition. My labours as Chairman of the Royal Commission on Indian Agriculture,[10] the experience I gained then, and my subsequent unremitting efforts in the cause of the Indian peasant, have not I believe, been wasted—the experts, at any rate, realise what solid and valuable progress has been made. An immense amount of hard work has been put in and I can say with certainty that far more has been achieved than is realised by the general public either in the United Kingdom or in America. In spite of the war we are carrying on with the work to the best of our ability and indeed as I have explained we are maturing important plans for post-war development. Though we should remain impatient to achieve quicker results, we cannot sweep aside merely by good intentions the constitutional, political and financial obstacles in our path. The first necessity if we are to ensure higher standards in India is to defeat the Germans and then the Japanese. If India is not to fail in its share in these tasks it must be allowed to concentrate on them till both are well and truly finished.

Enclosure to No. 113

EXTRACT FROM CHAPTER VI OF THE ABBÉ DUBOIS' "HINDU MANNERS, CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES"[11]

It is in the nature of things that, in times of peace and tranquillity, when the protection of a just Government is afforded both to person and property, an

[10] 1926–8. For the final report of this Commission, see Cmd. 3132.
[11] Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1897, pp. 94–7.

increase in the population of India should take place at an alarming rate, since it is an indisputable fact that no women in the world are more fruitful than the women of India, and nowhere else is the propagation of the human race so much encouraged. In fact, a Hindu only marries to have children, and the more he has the richer and the happier he feels. All over India it is enough for a woman to know how to cook, pound rice, and give birth to children. These three things are expected of her, especially the last, but nothing more. It would even appear displeasing if she aspired to anything else. No Hindu would ever dream of complaining that his family was too large, however poor he might be, or however numerous his children. A barren woman is made to feel that there can be no worse fate, and barrenness in a wife is the most terrible curse that can possibly fall on a family.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★[12]

Therefore, to make a new race of the Hindus, one would have to begin by undermining the very foundations of their civilisation, religion and polity, and by turning them into atheists and barbarians. Having accomplished this terrible upheaval, we might then perhaps offer ourselves to them as law-givers and religious teachers. But even then our task would be only half accomplished After dragging them out of the depths of barbarism, anarchy, and atheism into which we had plunged them, and after giving them new laws, a new polity, and a new religion, we should still have to give them new natures and different inclinations. Otherwise we should run the risk of seeing them soon relapse into their former state, which would be worse, if anything, than before.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★[13]

Since our European ways, manners, and customs, so utterly different from theirs, do not allow of our winning their confidence, at least let us continue to earn their respect and admiration by humane examples of compassion, generosity, and well-doing. Let us leave them their cherished laws and prejudices, since no human effort will persuade them to give them up, even in their own interests, and let us not risk making the gentlest and most submissive people in the world furious and indomitable by thwarting them. Let us take care lest we bring about, by some hasty or imprudent course of action, catastrophes which would reduce the country to a state of anarchy, desolation and ultimate ruin, for, in my humble opinion, the day when the Government attempts to interfere with any of the more important religious and civil usages of the Hindus will be the last of its existence as a political power.

12 and 13 These asterisks are reproduced from MSS. EUR. F. 125/14.

114

War Cabinet

Committee on India. Paper I (43) 1

L/PO/6/108a: f 69

NOTE BY THE SECRETARY OF THE WAR CABINET

WAR CABINET OFFICES, *14 September 1943*

In February, 1942,[1] when Constitutional questions affecting India were under discussion, the Prime Minister set up a Ministerial Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs, "to consider the present position in India and to make recommendations".

The Deputy Prime Minister has given instructions that the Committee should be reassembled to consider certain questions raised by the Viceroy Designate, as to the attitude which he should adopt in regard to the political situation.

The First Meeting of the Committee to consider these questions will be held on FRIDAY, 17th SEPTEMBER, at No. 11 Downing Street, at 3 p.m.

E. E. BRIDGES[2]

[1] See Vol. I, No. 196.

[2] Copies of this note were sent to Mr Attlee, Sir J. Anderson, Lord Halifax, Lord Wavell, Lord Simon, Mr Amery, Sir J. Grigg and Sir S. Cripps. On 1 October, by direction of Mr Churchill, it was circulated to all members of the War Cabinet as W.P. (43) 427. L/PO/6/108a: f 68.

115

Mr Jinnah to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY *15 September 1943*

Your Excellency,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 7th of September 1943,[1] for which I thank you. It is not marked confidential or personal, yet I write to ask you, whether you would agree to my letter of the 23rd August 1943[2] and your reply of the 7th September 1943 being released to the Press. You know so far I have refrained from saying anything in the Press with regard to the situation that has arisen in Kashmir because I thought I might be adding to what is already a very

[1] No. 99; the date should be 6 September. [2] No. 88.

serious situation, as the developments there have stirred up not only the Mussalmans of Kashmir but throughout India. It seems to me that in this very high tense of feeling that is prevailing, the publication of my letter and Your Excellency's reply might help to allay the situation and also the people should know that I myself have not been unmindful to the representations that have been pouring in for the last few months from the different parts of Kashmir and India. In these circumstances, if you agree, then I should like to release the correspondence at an appropriate moment.

I need hardly say that I appreciate very much indeed the assurances given by Your Excellency and that the matter is receiving Your Excellency's earnest consideration.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

116

War Cabinet

Committee on India. Paper I (43) 2

L/PO/6/108a: ff 83–6

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *15 September 1943*

I circulate a Memorandum by the Viceroy-designate raising issues as to future policy in India in regard to which he wishes to have the guidance of the War Cabinet before he leaves for India.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 116

MEMORANDUM BY THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE

Before leaving England I must be clear about the main aims of our policy in India. I shall be expected, shortly after my arrival, to say what line I intend to take, and I cannot maintain silence indefinitely. Apart from this, unless we are quite certain of our aims we cannot plan to achieve them.

2. The principles of the "Cripps Offer" hold good. Our ultimate aim may therefore be stated in the following sentence:—

"That as soon as possible after the war India should become independent—within the British Commonwealth we hope, but, if the Indian people really so desire, outside it—under an Indian-made constitution, which has been agreed

by the principal leaders of Indian opinion, and a treaty negotiated between Britain and India."

References to "Dominion Status" have long been a stumbling block to Indian politicians, and if our intention is that India should have the right to secede from the British Commonwealth we may as well say so directly.

3. This ultimate aim cannot be achieved until the Indian leaders themselves—the men whom organised Indian opinion will follow and obey—reach a working agreement on a number of complicated issues. These issues fall into three main groups—those which are communal in origin, those which concern the relations between British India and the States, and those which concern the nature of the new constitution itself as a piece of machinery. In the first group the major issues are (i) Unity versus partition (or Pakistan); (ii) the possibility of avoiding or mitigating partition by a rearrangement of provincial boundaries or a grouping of Provinces and States, or the creation of new provinces; (iii) the distribution of sovereign powers between the Centre and the units (whatever they may be) acceding to the new constitution; and (iv) the representation to be allowed to the various communities in the new legislatures and the new executives, and in the services. In the States Group we have (i) the difficulty of fitting autocratically governed States into the same framework as democratically governed British Indian units; (ii) the representation to be allowed to the States in the new Central legislature, the Central Executive, and the Central Services; and (iii) the extent to which direct relations between the Crown and acceding States will be continued. Finally, the main issue in the purely constitutional group is whether a constitution of the British type should be adopted, or whether some other democratic precedent, such as the American or the Swiss, should be followed.

This analysis is not exhaustive, but is sufficient to show how far the Indian leaders—both in British India and in the States—must go to accommodate one another before the practical business of constitution and treaty making can be undertaken with the slightest hope of success. The process of clearing the ground would be difficult even in the most favourable conditions. It is doubly difficult in the conditions created by the war and by the attitude of the Congress party and the Muslim League.

4. This brings me to our immediate aim, about which I require guidance. The "Cripps Offer" provided that during the war period India should be governed under the present constitution, but by a Government composed of "the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people." His Majesty's Government were, as before, to "bear the responsibility for, and retain control and direction of, the defence of India"; and the Governor-General was to retain his power to overrule his Council on any measure whereby "the safety, tranquillity or interests of British India or any part thereof are or may be in his

judgment essentially affected." The offer was rejected for reasons which are not fully known. But the ostensible reason was that the Congress Leaders felt it impossible to participate in a Government subordinate to the will of the Governor-General. Shortly after the rejection of the offer, the Congress launched the "Rebellion" of August 1942. It was necessary to place the Congress Leaders in detention, where they remain; and many of their followers are also in detention or undergoing sentences of imprisonment for offences committed in the disturbances. Our present policy is one of inaction, based on two considerations —*first*, that until the Congress leaders publicly abandon their principles of civil disobedience and hostility to the war effort we cannot negotiate with them or permit them to communicate with their own adherents or the leaders of other parties; and *secondly*, that His Majesty's Government have made their effort, and that nothing more can be done until the Indian leaders themselves get together and make constructive proposals. This policy is quite intelligible in itself—though politically-minded Indians can and do say that it is useless to exhort the Indian leaders to get together when most of them are in forcible segregation—and its adoption in the first instance was inevitable. But I do not believe that if we adhere to this policy we can make any real progress towards our ultimate aim.

5. Certain proposals are under consideration by the Secretary of State for progress on certain lines, i.e.:—

(1) That the Indianisation of the Executive Council should be completed by the transfer of the Home Department or the Finance Department or both of them to Indian members;
(2) That an enquiry into the form of constitution suitable to India should be undertaken by a body of experts, Indian or foreign;
(3) That India should make first steps towards autonomy in External Affairs, e.g. by raising the status of the Agent-General in Washington to that of Minister; by making more use of the High Commissioner in London; and by training a consular cadre of Indians.

There is much in favour of these proposals; but I am sure that if we regard them as a real means of progress to our ultimate aim, we mistake the character of the problem with which we are faced. It is essential that we face that problem squarely and define our immediate aim—whatever it may be—with a full understanding of its implications.

6. The Governor-General's Executive Council is at present composed of men selected for their personal qualities. Some of them have been active politicians in the past, but few of them have any actual political following or influence. The Council is, in short, an official Government the members of which are respected, not as popular leaders, but because they exercise authority and distribute patronage. It is a reasonably efficient organisation, and is per-

fectly competent to plan and execute administrative reforms, but it could not in any circumstances plan and execute political and constitutional reforms, for the simple reason that its members have no political backing. I can see no hope of early progress towards our ultimate aim except through the agency of an Indian Government in India of a different type; and if we decide to retain the present Executive Council we must also decide that substantial progress during the war is out of the question. Indianisation does not change the character of the Government, and we cannot hope to transfer political leadership to the Executive Council by incorporating in it party politicians who are prepared to abandon their parties. Nor would a constitutional enquiry conducted under the authority of His Majesty's Government or the present Government of India carry the slightest weight with men such as Gandhi, Nehru and Jinnah, who, if they ever do settle their differences, are likely to do so by hard and practical bargaining rather than by academic contemplation. Changes such as those suggested in External Affairs would have some administrative and educational value, but their political effect would be negligible. The first course open to us, then, is to adhere to the present policy of inaction for the duration of the war, to retain the existing Executive Council, and to apply such palliatives as we think fit without pretending to ourselves or to others that they are anything more than palliatives.

7. The second possible course is to revive the "Cripps Offer" in principle, and to attempt to establish in place of the present Government a Government composed of men selected for their representative character and for their influence with the Indian people. We need not exclude entirely administrators of the official type, but the Government would be predominantly one of political leadership. Such a Government would not necessarily be more, and might be considerably less, efficient than the present Government. But even in the administrative field it would possess certain advantages, and in the political and constitutional field it would be capable of taking the initiative.

8. I can see no half-way house between an official Government and a Government of political leadership, the one incapable and the other capable of initiative in the political and constitutional field. We must, therefore, decide whether our immediate aim is substantial progress towards the post-war settlement, or not. Acceptance of this aim implies a serious attempt to make a radical change of Government; rejection of it implies no change of Government and the prolongation of the present deadlock until the end of the war and perhaps for years after the war.

9. Before choosing between the two courses it is proper to survey briefly the present Indian scene. It is probable that in the mind of an intelligent Indian of moderate views the attention of Government in India should be devoted

largely, if not wholly, to the following subjects in the order in which they are given:—

(*a*) the evident maladjustments in the country's internal economy (e.g. the food and transportation problems and inflation);
(*b*) the solution of the constitutional deadlock;
(*c*) the successful prosecution of the war—particularly against Japan; and
(*d*) Post-war reconstruction—particularly in the industrial and economic field, but in the social field also.

Our own choice of subjects would be the same, but our order would probably be (*c*), (*a*), (*d*), (*b*). Intelligent Indians attach what may seem to be a disproportionate importance to the constitutional deadlock as compared with the prosecution of the war, because they feel humiliated by India's subordinate position, and are embittered by what they regard as British insincerity. These feelings are common to Muslims and Hindus, although the Muslims are at present buoyed up by the growing strength and importance of the Muslim League, and although the differences between the two communities are the main obstacle to progress. There is, I believe, among educated Indians a very general dissatisfaction with the present régime, and a growing sense of frustration and futility.

Of the important political parties, the Congress is in low water. Its leaders are in prison, and have shown no signs of changing their attitude to the British or to the war. There have been minor signs of revolt within the party, but no Congressman of any importance has yet succeeded in breaking away with any substantial following. Gandhi's latent influence is still immense. He is pacifist to the core, and a consummate master of evasive tactics. From whatever motive, he would apparently prefer to avoid a negotiated settlement with us. As long as he lives he will be the real head of the Congress Party, and the Party is likely to follow him.

The Muslim League's influence has increased greatly and is still increasing. Pakistan, which began as an undergraduate "squib," is now a serious plan, though nobody—Muslim or Hindu—is at all definite about the boundaries of the Muslim "home-lands." Jinnah is rapidly consolidating his position through the Governments of the Muslim-majority Provinces, and has had some success in bye-elections. The bulk of educated Muslim opinion is unquestionably behind him. Unfortunately, the Muslim community is deficient of talent. It is hardly too much to say that Jinnah is the Muslim League. He is a vain, shallow and ambitious man who would probably think the present time inopportune for any rapprochement with the Hindus. As a member of a Coalition Government at the Centre he would get much less limelight and be far less important than at present.

The Congress and the Muslim League are the two largest parties, and in

dealing with them we encounter the paradox that, while the mass of educated Hindus and Muslims are dissatisfied and frustrated, the leaders of the parties to which most of them may be assumed to belong would not welcome the end of the deadlock—except on their own terms. Gandhi and Jinnah are both dictators—Gandhi because he has built himself up as a saint, and Jinnah because there is nobody in his party who approaches him in ability.

The other parties are less important. The Mahasabha is suffering from internal dissensions, but, as it makes no claim to represent anybody but the Hindus, is in a way less intransigent than the Congress. The Depressed Classes are hardly in a position to assert themselves, and look to the British to see that they get a square deal. The Sikhs are inclined to be truculent, and are, perhaps, less perturbed by the continuance of the deadlock and its consequences than the other communities. Their main fear is that they will be subjected to perpetual Muslim domination, and they would fight rather than submit to this. The Anglo-Indians and Europeans are not in a position to assert themselves in the political arena.

Thus we have a situation in which (i) public opinion and official opinion are agreed more than is usual about the programme that Government should undertake; (ii) most educated people, as individuals, would be glad to see the deadlock ended; and (iii) the leaders of the two political parties capable of ending the deadlock are probably, for widely different reasons, in favour of continuing it. Now that the United Nations are manifestly winning the war, it is probable that the first two factors will increase in importance, and it is possible that the strength of the third will diminish.

It is against this background in India that we must make our choice; but we must also bear in mind the large weight of public opinion in favour of a fresh attempt at a settlement, both in this country and abroad.

10. Our first possible course—inaction and no change in the present Government—has many short-term advantages. It involves little immediate risk or administrative disturbance. The present Government, with all its shortcomings and limitations, can and does govern. I am confident that it can maintain order and take such measures as are necessary for the establishment of the South-East Asia Command, and for the prosecution of the Eastern War from India, provided that too great an additional strain is not thrown on Indian internal economy.

Its disadvantages are more remote but in the end serious. If we adopt this comparatively safe and easy course—merely applying such lubricants as may seem necessary to prevent the machine from creaking audibly—we shall end the war and attend the Peace Conference with India sullen and resentful, and determined to get out of the British Commonwealth as soon as possible. The deadlock will, I fear, continue, and I do not see how it is to be ended except by

revolution. We have also to consider the weight of international opinion and the possibility of international pressure. The war has at least obscured some of the divergencies of interest between Britain and India, and has thrown up urgent problems in which British and Indians can, if they wish, co-operate wholeheartedly. There will be no such common platform when the war ends.

11. Our second possible course is more difficult and, immediately, more dangerous. We should endeavour to establish, both in the Provinces and at the Centre, Coalition Governments committed to an acceptable war programme. Of the Provinces, I need not perhaps say very much. It might be necessary to reconstruct some of the Governments now functioning—that would depend on the nature of the agreement between the Parties—but the main task would be to revive Provincial autonomy where it has lapsed, and to ensure that the resultant Governments were genuine Coalition Governments. This by itself would involve no changes in the Constitution Act, though a Coalition Government at the Centre might wish to promote changes after it had settled down.

The crux is in the treatment of the Centre. The substitution for the present Executive Council of a Coalition Government of party leaders would involve:—

(i) a preliminary agreement between ourselves and the principal parties on the purposes for which and the conditions on which the Coalition Government is to be formed;

(ii) a clear understanding by ourselves of the consequences of (*a*) a failure to reach this preliminary agreement and (*b*) the successful establishment of a Coalition Government.

12. I deal first with the procedure by which the preliminary agreement might be reached. I believe that we must aim at a meeting of selected party leaders, and that the discussions at this meeting must be secret. But it would be necessary to consult the present Executive Council and, if possible, carry them with us, before issuing invitations, and the invitations would have to be so worded as to ensure that the party leaders invited knew what they were in for, and were genuinely ready to join in the discussion on the terms stated. I append a very rough outline (Annexure A) of the kind of invitation I have in mind. This document sets out the purposes for which and the conditions on which the discussion would be held, and the Coalition Government would be formed. It would be necessary to include the principal Congress leaders—Gandhi and Nehru—and they would, I think, have to be released unconditionally for the discussion. The release of other political prisoners would be a matter for the Coalition Government itself, if it were formed.

13. As I have said above, the meeting would be held "in camera." My idea is to hold the members of the conference together like a jury until they decided to accept or refuse a National Coalition Government on the terms proposed.

The first contingencies to be considered are: (i) a refusal by one of the major parties to take part in the discussion—directly or by an attempt to impose conditions which we could not accept; and (ii) a breakdown in the discussion itself. We can deal with these contingencies only by publicity; the public in India and elsewhere might well come to the conclusion that we were right and the party leaders wrong. The main embarrassment would be that Gandhi and Nehru would be once more at large and hostile, but they could, if necessary, be rearrested.

14. More serious are the possible consequences of the successful establishment of a Coalition Government. The new Members would for the most part be men who have hitherto been hostile to the British connection. Some of them—those of the Congress Party in particular—would be frankly revolutionary in outlook, and distinctly cynical about ends and means. They might take office in all sincerity; on the other hand they might do so with mental reservations, and with the specific intention of forcing the issue of "Cabinet Responsibility" on which the negotiations with Sir Stafford Cripps finally broke down. If this happened the Governor-General might be forced to dismiss his Government, and would have the very difficult task of reconstituting a Government of the old style amid popular disappointment, and with another "rebellion" on his hands. This is the most likely cause of failure; but there are other possible causes—communal disagreement resulting in the withdrawal of the Muslim League is one, and interference by the party organisations is another. The plain fact is that, if a Coalition Government were formed at the Centre, His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General could overrule the Indian Members only on issues of absolutely vital importance. Inefficiency, and even hindrance to the war effort, would have to be tolerated up to the point at which a complete constitutional breakdown became worth while.

15. The risks of our second possible course are thus considerable. But it is, so far as I can judge, the only course that can possibly save us from a situation after the war in which we are pledged to give India her freedom, but can move neither backwards nor forwards. My personal opinion is that, in spite of the risks, this second course must be our immediate aim. But it can be adopted only when I am satisfied, after taking advice in India, that there is some prospect of success, and the timing of the approach to the party leaders should be left to my judgment. I would take an early opportunity of making a conciliatory but non-committal statement on the lines of the draft in Annexure B, and would follow this up in say, three or four months' time, by a second statement postponing action again, or by the invitation outlined in Annexure A.

16. I know that many arguments can be adduced against my proposal. It can be said, for instance, that we have been entirely wrong in attempting to impose upon India a democratic constitution of the British type, and that a Coalition

Government composed of the present party leaders would merely continue a mistaken policy and prejudice a final settlement on new constitutional lines. I feel that we cannot go back on the history of the past twenty-five years, and whatever constitution India may adopt she must begin to work it through the leaders she now has. Again, it can be said that we cannot afford to take risks when the operations of the South-East Asia Command depend upon the tranquillity of India and the competence of the Indian Government. This is a valid criticism, but the guarantee of tranquillity in India and of stable Government is now, and will remain, the presence in the country of a large force of British and American troops, not to mention the Indian Army. The risks are there, but on a long view they are worth taking. Finally, it may be suggested that the proposal is made on the probability that the party leaders will not co-operate, and that what is intended is really a tactical move to secure propaganda advantage in this country and in America. I must make it clear that, if my proposal is approved, we must be completely sincere about it, and do our utmost to succeed. Insincerity would be fatal.

17. To summarise, I recommend:—

(i) that His Majesty's Government adopt as the immediate aim of our policy in India the establishment of a Coalition Government of party leaders at the Centre;

(ii) that the scheme for the establishment of such a Government be as outlined in my draft invitation (Annexure A);

(iii) that the time at which an appeal on these lines is made be left to my judgment, and that in the meantime I be authorised to make a statement on the lines of Annexure B.

W.

Annexure A to Enclosure to No. 116

I want your help in ending the present political deadlock. I am quite satisfied that the British Government and the British people are at one with the Indian people in their desire that India should be free to control her own affairs, and that it will be for India to say whether she remains a partner in the free and equal British Commonwealth of Nations, or severs herself from it. But, although there is now no difference of principle between the British and the Indian peoples, we are making no progress towards our goal. I am not going to attempt to apportion the blame for our failure. All that I see is that we are on the road of bitterness and estrangement, and that unless we turn off it very soon we shall lose ourselves in endless and fruitless arguments about unity and partition, about constitutional forms, about British insincerity and the inability of Indians to agree among themselves, and so on. The war will not last forever, and when it ends we shall be unprepared for the great tasks that lie ahead.

2. The solution, I firmly believe, is a constructive partnership between the leaders of the great Indian political parties—particularly the Congress and the Muslim League—for the remainder of the war, on the footing that the principles of the new constitution and the method of making it are still open to discussion and that one of the tasks of the partnership must be to settle these questions in a friendly atmosphere.

How can such a partnership be formed? Surely, by the formation of a Coalition Government at the Centre—a Government of political leadership. There are four tasks before any Government in India to-day:—

(i) The prosecution of the war against Japan to a successful ending;
(ii) The regulation of our internal economy so that the strain and suffering imposed by total war are reduced to a minimum;
(iii) The planning of post-war reconstruction not only in industry, but in the wider economic and social fields; and
(iv) The making of preparations for the new constitution.

These tasks are of the highest importance, and should inspire all of us—British and Indians alike—to greater efforts than we have ever made before. But the fourth task can be performed only by a Government backed by the great political parties—including the Congress Party, many of whose leaders are now in detention.

The Coalition Government I have in mind would consist of the real party leaders—men nominated by the parties, in accordance with an agreement to be reached at the discussion proposed below.

3. Before going further, I must point out that there are certain conditions which must be accepted and observed by all of us if my plan is to succeed:—

(1) There must be no recriminations about the past. I do not ask for apologies or recantations from the Congress or any other party. The party leaders must similarly refrain from recriminations against the present Government of India and His Majesty's Government.
(2) We must all of us be solidly and sincerely behind the war effort. The first and most urgent item on our programme is the successful prosecution of the war against Japan.
(3) There must be no renewal of Civil Disobedience and similar activities, which can only prejudice success.
(4) There can be no immediate constitutional change at the Centre, and the Commander-in-Chief must continue to be the War Member of the Government. Apart from the fact that it would be difficult, and perhaps impossible, to undertake complicated legislation in war time, His Majesty's Government and I, as Governor-General, must retain the powers we now possess to overrule the Executive Council in the last

resort, and on occasion to act independently of it. I am perfectly frank about this. We are at war, and there may be occasions when His Majesty's Government and I shall be compelled to intervene. I can therefore give no undertaking about "Cabinet Responsibility." But I see no reason why, in practice, we should not work as a Cabinet, and the proof of my sincerity is that I am prepared to make a radical change in the character of the Executive Council. It would indeed be foolish to make and execute a plan of this kind with the intention of reducing it to ridicule and failure at the first opportunity.

(5) The members of the Coalition Government must be prepared to work as colleagues in the knowledge that the strength, and indeed the existence, of the Government depend upon their ability to see and appreciate the views of parties other than their own.

(6) The establishment of a Coalition Government at the Centre implies the revival of Provincial autonomy where it has lapsed, and the formation of Coalition Governments in what are now the Section 93 Provinces.

(7) The release of political prisoners would be a matter for the Coalition Government.

(8) The constitutional problem will be referred to the Coalition Government, which will arrange for the investigations and discussions necessary for its solution. The Coalition Government could, of course, act only for British India, but there is no reason why, with my assistance, it should not enter into discussions with the Indian States.

The constitutional problem is the most likely source of communal discord, and there must be a communal truce. Attempts to whip up feeling on highly controversial subjects such as unity and partition would be out of place.

If we are all prepared to accept and observe these conditions in letter and spirit, I believe we can do more for India in two years than in ten years of Round Table Conferences. If we are not, then the present arrangements must continue until times are more favourable.

4. I now put to you two plain questions:—

(*a*) Are you prepared to co-operate in the formation of a Coalition Government for the purposes and on the conditions outlined above? and

(*b*) If so, would you be willing to take part in a discussion at Viceroy's House to prepare a definite plan?

With regard to (*a*), I ask you to remember that this is not a mere repetition of the "Cripps Offer." That offer dealt primarily with the method of settling the new Constitution. My plan leaves this matter entirely open. You are being asked to co-operate in the formation of a Coalition Government for British

India, and one of the tasks of that Government would be to consider by what method the new Constitution can be made to take shape. There is no question of any constitutional commitment by any party at this stage, and the Coalition Government can, as far as I am concerned, make entirely fresh proposals. You will, of course, appreciate that the British Government could not be a party to the coercion of Muslims by Hindus or *vice versa*.

As regards (*b*), I enclose a list of the persons to whom this letter is being sent. Those of them now in detention would be released unconditionally to take part in the discussion. The discussion itself must be secret—with no announcements and no communication with the outside world until final conclusions are reached. While it continues, I hope that those taking part in it will accept the hospitality of my house. The discussion would have to cover the formation of the new Government, the selection of its members, and the distribution of portfolios. I do not myself intend to take part in it, but shall be available to help if I am wanted, and will provide a competent secretarial staff. I am satisfied that we cannot proceed at all unless the representatives both of the Congress and of the Muslim League are prepared to take part, with the sincere intention of carrying out the plan if they possibly can. I am also satisfied that a meeting larger than that contemplated by me would have little chance of success.

5. I shall be grateful if you will reply with the least possible delay. This letter and your reply will, when matters are settled one way or the other, be published.

Annexure B to Enclosure to No. 116

The Indian people will expect from a new Viceroy some statement about the political deadlock. For the time being, I must ask them to be patient. I shall for some weeks inevitably be much occupied with the arrangements for the establishment of the South East Asia Command, and it would in any case be foolish of me to attempt to express an opinion on so complex a matter before I have had time to look about me. But I can tell you with absolute certainty that the British Government and the British people sincerely desire that as soon as possible after the war India shall become independent—remaining within the British Commonwealth of Nations they hope, but, if the Indian people really so desire, outside it—under an agreed Indian-made constitution and a treaty negotiated between Britain and India. Attempts to make substantial progress during the war have so far failed. Further attempts are not by any means ruled out, but they cannot be made lightly and without regard to the success of the military operations for which India is the base.

117

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *15 September 1943*

Your letters of August 28th[1] and September 6th[2] have just blown in, but the mail is off almost immediately, so I can hardly attempt to answer them. The general situation at the moment is pretty exciting, at any rate so far as Italy is concerned. If we can hold on to Salerno till the Eighth Army comes up, all will be well and the Germans will, I think, have to fall back to somewhere between Rome and Naples. On the other hand, if Salerno should fail, I doubt if we shall be able to do much more than hold the heel and the toe for the time being.

2. I was glad to get your telegram[3] this morning saying that you had decided to set aside old scruples and try a lottery, or rather, as I should prefer to call it, a premium or prize loan. Also I should be inclined not to do entirely without interest, but have one or even two per cent. interest and devote only the balance of say another two per cent. to the prizes. Indeed, in the case of the big investor I should be disposed to offer even less perhaps in the way of prizes, but make the prizes few but substantial. On the other hand, I think there is a great deal to be said, on moral as well as other grounds, for a prize scheme with lots of prizes, not necessarily large in amount, for the investor of the savings bank type. That kind of person, when he has saved say a hundred rupees, is not likely to go on the spree with a 500 rupee prize, but perhaps more like[ly] to add it to his savings from the point of view of starting a shop or something of that sort. Possibly a savings bond for the small investor, not convertible into cash during the next so many years, with the prizes in the shape of additional packets of bonds, might be a good way of handling that side of the problem, and certainly have the greatest anti-inflationary effect. On the other hand it may be that only prizes in actual current cash will afford the interest and excitement and spread of gossip which constitute the real anti-inflationary value of such an issue.

Also interest means little to the small saver.

L.

3. I have just had an opportunity of a talk with Chester Beatty of the Diamond Syndicate and impressed on him the great opportunity which is offered at this moment by Indian profiteers having money to burn for unloading diamonds and company shares in India. He took up the idea warmly and I hope something may come of it. This is confirmed by what you tell me in paragraph 10[4] of your letter of September 6th about the buying out of British

companies at more than their real value. I am not sure that it would be at all a bad thing if some of these wealthy Indians found themselves holding large sums in South African gold or copper mines.

4. I won't attempt to discuss by letter the difficult Bengal situation. But I quite realise how the question of Section 93 in that Province at once raises the communal issue, not only in Bengal, but all over India. It all goes to confirm the view which I have been steadily moving towards and which Coupland advocates in his third volume,[5] that our parliamentary system is not suited for the Provinces either. Coupland advocates the Swiss system, under which the Executive is selected by proportional representation by secret ballot by both Houses of the Legislature together, and is from that day on independent of the Legislature for the rest of its life. That would at any rate secure permanent coalitions based not on manœuvring and intriguing, but on the composition of the Legislature, and once selected able to disregard party manœuvres and concentrate on the job of administering.

P.S.V.—

I have already called for papers on this. We have a file and Reforms have more.

L.

[1] No. 91. [2] No. 100. [3] 7735 of 13 September. L/F/7/826.
[4] Omitted from No. 100. [5] See No. 103, note 2.

118

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

No. 469 "BARNES COURT", SIMLA, *16 September 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

Will Your Excellency kindly refer to your letter of the 14th of September 1943,[1] in which you have asked about the outcome of the Premier's talks with Jinnah? From the account which Khizar has given me the meeting can scarcely be described as in any way conclusive. The conversations lasted for hours and hours, but most of the time was taken up by a series of lectures from Jinnah about the services that he had rendered to mankind and by a reconstruction of the attack[2] made on him recently by his Khaksar assailant. Khizar did not succeed for a long time in getting Jinnah to come to the point and even then

[1] Para. 4 of Lord Linlithgow's letter of 11–14 September 1943 to Sir B. Glancy read: 'I shall be interested to hear the outcome of your Premier's talks with Jinnah. It will be particularly interesting to see whether he has the necessary character to stand up to that very astute politician.' MSS. EUR. F. 125/92.
[2] See No. 62, para. 3.

the Qaid-i-Azam was as evasive as possible. It seems clear that Jinnah is set on obtaining mastery for the League over the Punjab Ministry as soon as this can be achieved, and one interesting point that emerged was that Jinnah did not seem to be at all perturbed by the possibility of a Section 93 administration in the Punjab; in fact he expressed the view that this might help to rally Muslims in the Punjab, as had been the experience in the North-West Frontier Province. Khizar made it plain, he tells me, that he intended to abide by the Sikander-Jinnah Pact[3] and to maintain the name "Unionist" or "Unionist Coalition" for the Punjab Ministry. Jinnah showed no sign of wishing to denounce the Pact, provided of course that he could interpret it entirely in his own way. He maintained that the Unionist Party had ceased to exist when the Pact was drawn up, and when Khizar pointed out that he himself was returned to the Assembly on the Unionist ticket Jinnah was much incensed and the meeting nearly came to an abrupt end. However, they seem to have parted outwardly as friends. It seems fairly clear that Jinnah will stage an attack on the Punjab Ministry before very long, but the precise moment which he will choose is still obscure.

Khizar and Sir Chhotu and Sardar Baldev Singh are proceeding to Delhi today in deference to Your Excellency's wishes to discuss the food problem, but I do not suppose that you will have time to give Khizar a separate interview. The Premier and his colleagues all say that they are ready to do what they can in organising a campaign to induce growers to bring their grain to the Mandis, but they think that they are much more likely to be effective in this direction if by means of action taken by the Central Government the Punjabi can be definitely assured that the Bengal authorities have ceased to make a profit out of the sale of foodstuffs; there is undoubtedly a good deal of strong feeling about this abroad in the Punjab and of this I believe that Sir J. P. Srivastava is fully aware.

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

[3] See No. 73, note 2.

119

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 407

R/30/1/4: ff 123–5

Economic Situation in India

MEMORANDUM BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF

WAR CABINET OFFICES, *17 September 1943*

On the 16th August the Secretary of State for India presented a paper[1] on the economic situation in India to the Cabinet Committee on Indian financial

questions which disclosed an extremely disquieting situation, the continuation of which would jeopardise the security of India as a base for operations in South-East Asia.

Among the problems to which he drew attention was the critical food situation in India. This had been considered by the War Cabinet on the 4th August[2] in relation to a recommendation[3] by the Secretary of State for India that 500,000 tons of wheat should be imported into India between September 1943 and February 1944. The War Cabinet agreed to provide shipping for up to 100,000 tons of barley from Iraq and to make preliminary arrangements for the despatch, if necessary, of 50,000 tons of wheat from Australia.

On the 13th August[4] the Viceroy telegraphed warning the Cabinet in the most solemn terms that, unless the appropriate help was received, the Government of India could not be responsible for the continuing stability of India now, nor for her capacity to serve as a base against Japan next year. Annexed is an extract from G.H.Q., India, Weekly Intelligence Summary which illustrates the appalling conditions in Eastern Bengal and Assam.

Commander-in-Chief, India, has pointed out from time to time the serious operational implications inherent in the situation, and on the 2nd August[5] he said that it was of the highest importance, from the strategical and general military point of view, that the Government of India should receive all possible aid in dealing with the food situation.

He has now telegraphed again[6] in even stronger terms. He points out in this telegram that, although food may exist in sufficient quantity in India, it is impossible to ensure fair distribution because of the low standard of administration in the country as well as the weakness of the communication system generally and the lack of an informed and strong public opinion.

The Secretary of State for India has made it clear that the food problem is only one symptom of a generally unsatisfactory economic situation. We consider that we would be failing in our duty to the War Cabinet if we did not point out that, unless the necessary steps are taken to rectify this situation, the efficient prosecution of the war against Japan by forces based on India will be gravely jeopardised and may well prove impossible. If it should transpire that, as Commander-in-Chief, India, and the Government of India consider, a necessary step in this direction is the diversion of shipping to the transporting of food grains to India, then the operational implications of an administrative breakdown in India will have to be given full weight.

It may very well be that these food crises will be a constantly recurring feature unless steps are taken to bolster up the present Indian administrative system by every possible means, including the reinfusion of considerable numbers of European personnel. But that does not alter the fact that urgent steps

[1] L/F/7/687. [2] No. 71. [3] No. 67. [4] No. 78. [5] See No. 102, note 1.
[6] No. 102.

are necessary to deal with this particular crisis, and, so far as we can see, to import additional food at once is the only way of doing this.

A. F. BROOKE
C. PORTAL
E. N. SYFRET

Annex to No. 119

EXTRACT FROM G.H.Q., INDIA, WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY NO. 94, DATED 20TH AUGUST, 1943—PART III, SECURITY INTELLIGENCE

INTERNAL

5. A special report on conditions in East Bengal and Assam indicates that famine conditions are now rife in those districts. In Chittagong, A.R.P. personnel have had to take over the daily removal of corpses from streets and houses. In Dacca, the poor are living on what rice water they can get, since even the rich are unable to obtain rice. Cholera, small-pox and starvation are causing hundreds of deaths daily in the surrounding villages. Similar conditions prevail over a large area of East Bengal, and have given rise to a widespread incidence of thefts and dacoities. Suicides and child-selling have been reported.

6. Such conditions, though at their worst in these districts, are not confined to the North-East. A British resident on an estate in Mysore writes that it is dangerous to walk through the estate now, as they are having trouble over food. Thousands of Indian workers are starving. At a time when Government are urging the estates to increase their output of rubber, many estates in Travancore have had to stop working owing to supplies of rice being insufficient to feed their labour. In planting districts in Coorg coolies die by the wayside of starvation.

7. LABOUR.—In the Calcutta area there have been numerous strikes in mills and factories and, though the majority of these strikes have been short-lived, the cumulative effect on war production has been considerable. Workers' demands in all cases have centred round the supply of food grains at reasonable prices, and when this demand has been met the situation has rapidly returned to normal. On existing evidence it appears that the strikers are influenced by purely economic, and not political, motives.

8. FIRES AND LABOUR TROUBLES.—There has long been reason to suspect that fires in military installations are not unconnected with labour unrest due to economic distress amongst the staff. This suspicion has been strengthened by the fact that in one Ordnance Depot, where small fires formerly occurred with some regularity, adequate measures for the provision of grains for the workers have been accompanied by a complete cessation of fires.

9. AXIS RADIO.—The following extract is taken from the "Azad Hind" news in Tamil for the 14th August, relayed from Germany:—

> "It is reported that the Indian Independence League at Bangkok has decided to enlist the help of Japan, Thailand and Burma to export rice to India and thus improve the food situation. Though it is normally impossible to send rice to India from Japanese occupied territory, the league is prepared to do so if the British Government approves the proposal and gives an undertaking that the food so sent will not be reserved for military consumption or exported from India. This gesture of the league is expressive of the sympathy of Indians in East Asia and their desire to relieve the suffering of their Indian brethren. If the British do not accept this generous offer they will be betraying their true intentions."

* * * * * *[7]

11. In view of the prevailing economic conditions in India, the danger of this type of propaganda and the embarrassment it might cause should it reach the people affected, need not be stressed. The effect of such statements on the army must also be considered especially if put out by enemy forward propaganda units, or after capture, to Indian troops on the Eastern frontier. Many Indian soldiers serving in East India have seen the famine conditions prevailing there for themselves, and Indian soldiers in general are already apprehensive of the effects of food shortages upon their families.

* * * * * *[8]

15. The avowed intention of Congress to attack the staunchness of the soldier through the medium of his family, is only to be expected. Elsewhere in the summary reference is made to Axis broadcasts, purporting to offer rice from Japanese occupied territories to starving India; every anti-Allied and disruptive agency may be expected similarly to exploit India's food difficulties to the utmost. In this connection, a formation report from Chittagong states that men (both British and Indian) are so affected by the sights they see around them, that they are feeding beggars with their own rations, even though they are disobeying orders by so doing. The general feeling amongst Indian troops is that immediate assistance must be given to the people of Chittagong, and that the Sirkar has already failed in its duty.

7 and 8 These asterisks are reproduced from the War Cabinet Paper.

120

War Cabinet

Committee on India. I (43) 1st Meeting

L/PO/6/108a: ff 78–82

Those present at this meeting held at 11 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 17 September 1943 at 3 pm were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Sir John Anderson, Viscount Simon, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Edward Bridges (Secretary)

Also present were: Viscount Halifax, Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Sir D. Monteath, Mr E. M. Jenkins

The Committee had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State (I. (43) 2),[1] covering a Memorandum by the Viceroy-Designate about future policy in India, on which he wished to have the guidance of the War Cabinet.

In his Memorandum the Viceroy-Designate analysed the position, and suggested that there were two courses open to us. First, to continue with no change in the present Government. Secondly, to endeavour to establish in the Centre (and in the Provinces) Coalition Governments committed to an acceptable war programme. The latter course involved a preliminary agreement at a meeting of selected Party Leaders, to be held in camera. The risks attending this second course were considerable. Nevertheless, the Viceroy-Designate thought that this should be our immediate aim, as the only course which would save us from a situation after the war in which we were pledged to give India her freedom, but could neither move backwards nor forwards. The Viceroy-Designate suggested that he should have preliminary authority to explore the possibility of making an approach on the lines suggested.

Attached to the Memorandum were two Annexures: Annexure A was the first draft of the invitation which, if his plan were adopted, he might send to the political leaders when in his judgment there was some prospect of their accepting it. Annexure B was the draft of a statement which might be made in the meantime.

THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE made an oral statement amplifying his Memorandum. While the chances were probably against acceptance of an offer on the lines proposed, nevertheless he thought that this was the only way in which real progress could be made.

The following were the chief points made in a preliminary discussion:—

(a) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA thought that the chances of acceptance of the plan were perhaps even less favourable than Lord Wavell had estimated. Nevertheless, the line of approach suggested was, he thought, the only one by which the political deadlock could be broken.

He attached great importance to the timing of any such offer, which should only be made at a time when the war situation was definitely in our favour. He doubted, however, whether Jinnah or Gandhi were keen enough for a settlement to be willing to accept the responsibilities which the plan proposed entailed at the present time, when serious difficulties were being experienced in connection with inflation and food questions. As against this must be set the special prestige attaching to the incoming Viceroy. He thought that if the plan proposed by Lord Wavell was to be tried, this should be done not later than the following Spring.

(b) VISCOUNT HALIFAX, on balance, favoured the adoption of the plan, on the ground that it was important not to allow the existing deadlock to continue for an indefinite period without any attempt being made to break it, and that we should show that we were continuing to try.

(c) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR thought that it was almost impossible to reach any agreement while Gandhi was alive and therefore was opposed to any offer on the lines suggested being made at the present time. Furthermore it was quite clear that, even if the offer was accepted, any Congress members who were appointed to the Viceroy's Council would be under Gandhi's control and would obey his orders. There would thus be two Kings in Brentford.[2]

(d) THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL pointed out that the Cripps offer had consisted of two stages. First, a Declaration to set up after the war a Constitution-making body on certain lines which were specified. Secondly, but subject to the acceptance of this offer, an invitation to the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people to immediate effective participation in the counsels of their country. The present proposal seemed to him to reverse these two stages and the reversal was in his view a fundamental and most serious change, since the need for prior agreement by the parties who were to form the interim Government as to the basis of the future Indian-made Government was no longer stipulated. He asked whether the radical change contemplated by the Viceroy-Designate in the character of the Executive Council would not greatly weaken the responsibility of the Viceroy and of the Secretary of State.

(e) THE LORD CHANCELLOR was disposed to agree with the Lord President, and pointed out that Constitution-making must proceed by stages at each of which the ultimate responsibility for Government at that stage was left quite clear. If he understood Lord Wavell's plan correctly, the stage to which he intended to proceed would hand over the substance of authority

[1] No. 116.

[2] A phrase taken from the Duke of Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* (1672). Said of persons who were once rivals, but had become reconciled.

to the party leaders but leave responsibility with the Governor-General and His Majesty's Government. That would be a very difficult, uncertain and indeed dangerous position and he could not regard this as an appropriate stage for a "rest".

(f) LORD WAVELL agreed that the Cripps offer was framed as described by the Lord President, but pointed out that the discussion of it had not proceeded as contemplated: in fact the discussion centred largely round paragraph (e) of the draft Declaration. He added that if the Cripps offer had been accepted and if the Indian leaders had then, as members of the interim Government offered, agreed in proposing an alteration in the form of the Constitution-making body suggested it would have been very difficult for us to refuse such a change. He thought that the Constitution-making body proposed in the Cripps offer was too big and unwieldy ever to be effective. In the light of what actually happened in the discussion of the Cripps offer he thought it preferable and even necessary to reverse the order of its two parts, and did not consider that any radical departure from the precedent of the Cripps offer was involved.

(g) THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER agreed with the difficulty of having any dealings with Gandhi. Indeed, he was not very keen on having negotiations with the leaders of the political Parties. We were more likely to make a successful approach to the matter if the Centre was built up out of elements drawn from the Provinces and the Indian States, rather than from the political Parties.

Discussion then turned on the position of the Viceroy *vis-à-vis* the members of his Council, if the second course proposed by Lord Wavell was adopted.

(h) LORD WAVELL said that he had sat for two years on the Viceroy's Executive Council and had observed its working. The Viceroy had of course the power to overrule his Council and that power would continue. In practice, however, at the present time the Viceroy's attitude to his Council was not dissimilar from that of a Prime Minister to his Cabinet. He had never seen the Viceroy definitely over-rule his Council, or act without them. There had, however, frequently been occasions when the Viceroy, if he saw that the discussion was not likely to go in favour of the course he proposed, would postpone further discussion until he had had private talks with members of his Council. Then he would perhaps bring the matter forward again in a somewhat different form.

In proposing to include the leaders of the political Parties in the Council, he was not proposing to bring about any fundamental change in this position, although he realised that a Viceroy would have a more difficult position with a Council comprising the leaders of Indian political Parties than with the present Council, or with one composed on similar lines.

(i) THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL said that the Cripps offer had at least provided a preliminary test, since the War Cabinet had contemplated that our offer in regard to the framing of a Constitution would be accepted before the political leaders were invited to join the Viceroy's Council. Much would depend upon the spirit in which Indian political leaders joined the Viceroy's Council. If they joined it with a desire to co-operate and to see an efficient Government, no doubt things could be made to work. If, however, they entered the Council with a desire to exploit the situation in the interests of the different political Parties, then the Viceroy's difficulties would be most seriously increased, and he would view the situation very gravely.

A number of more detailed points were made on particular paragraphs of Lord Wavell's Memorandum:—

(j) LORD HALIFAX thought it was undesirable to use a phrase such as occurred in the last line on page 6[3] "men nominated by the Parties".
It was explained that this phrase had not been intended literally.

(k) Some considerable discussion ensued as to whether it was desirable that the invitation set out in Annexure "A" should include words referring so explicitly to the making of preparations for the new Constitution.
The general view was that the inclusion of so definite a reference would greatly increase the difficulties of getting the Indian leaders to co-operate.

(l) LORD HALIFAX, while agreeing with this view, suggested that the draft should be framed so as to leave it open to the Indian political leaders to make alternative proposals in regard to the framing of a new Constitution, if they so desired.

(m) THE LORD CHANCELLOR suggested the omission of lines 5 and 6[4] in paragraph 2, and of paragraph 2 (iv). Instead, there might be inserted a phrase such as the following:—

"It might even be that, if things went well, it would be possible to discuss a plan for the new Constitution during the war".

(n) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA suggested that the references to Constitution-making, in the last three or four sentences of paragraph 7,[5] should also be made less explicit, but thought that it should be made clear that we stood by the main principles embodied in the Cripps offer.

The Committee—

Decided to hold a further Meeting when Lord Wavell had had an opportunity of thinking over the points made in discussion.

[3] i.e. p. 265, line 22. [4] i.e. from 'and that one of the tasks' to 'friendly atmosphere'.
[5] Page 7 of the Cabinet Paper is evidently intended, i.e. para. 4 from 'My plan . . .' to '. . . *vice versa*'.

121

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *18 September 1943, 6.40 pm*
Received: 18 September, 8.15 pm

No. 2069–S. Your personal telegram No. 20660[1] dated 10th September.

2. Food position in India turns almost entirely on production and distribution of cereals. Normal production is about 51 million tons of which 24 rice, 11 wheat, 10 millets, 4 gram, 2 maize. There is normally net deficit in rice of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons met by imports from Burma and small wheat surplus of 200 thousand tons. Other grains about sufficient. Net domestic cereal position is therefore a deficiency of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ million tons.

3. Bulk of this produce goes direct from producer to consumer. No [*sic*] negligible quantity passes through mills for processing. There is therefore no bottleneck for control.[2] Though wheat trade is relatively well organised, there is no organised rice trade. Supply depends on inducing some 50 million small farmers to bring small surpluses to market.

4. Other factors affecting distribution are fixed diet habits, e.g. rice-eaters will not readily[3] eat wheat, size of country, number of autonomous administrations, Estates [States?] and Provinces (food is provincial subject). Effect of propaganda is limited by illiteracy of great majority of producers and consumers.

5. Commodity supply position was taken in hand immediately on outbreak of war in 1939 and problem was treated primarily as one of price control. Developments were carefully watched and co-ordination of policy achieved by series of conferences convened by Centre of Provincial and State representatives. Emergency powers were taken and applied both by Central and Provincial Governments as situation demanded. Building up of reserve food stocks, as in the United Kingdom, was not considered feasible out of domestic resources since, given the net supply position, it would have created artificial shortage and serious economic dislocation, and alternative imports on large scale from overseas would not have been welcomed by His Majesty's Government in view of the shipping position. Early loss of Malaya and Burma in spring of 1942 greatly aggravated both supply and price situation and thereafter Emergency Powers taken by Central Government under Defence of India Rules and delegated to provinces aimed at controlling and directing flow of supplies and against hoarding by individuals. Foodgrains Control Order, May 1942, applied with varying efficiency by provinces and most States, forbade holding more

than small quantity of foodgrains except under licence. Foodgrains Futures and Options Prohibition Order sought to check speculative activities. Food production drive last year increased acreage under foodgrains by about 8 million acres and at least 50 per cent. increase over last year's results is hoped for this year.

6. Despite these measures, prices rose steeply and price control, unsupported by adequate reserves, drove stocks underground. Situation at end of 1942, when Food Department was created, was critical in spite of generally good harvest in 1941–42 and prospect of[4] excellent winter crop. Certain factors exercised an effect in normally deficit areas quite disproportionate to the apparent overall supply position in the country as a whole. Apart from effect of cessation of Burma imports which deprived Bombay and the Malabar Coast and to a lesser extent Bengal of most of their normal supplies, floods in Sind and cyclones in Bengal and Madras, the absolute physical volume of foodgrains had not been seriously impaired but the amount actually available out of physical supply had decreased, and demand in relation to availability of supply had increased. This was accentuated by combination *inter alia* of (1) adverse supply position, (2) fear of invasion, (3) diminution of the marketable surplus through increased holding and/or increased consumption by cultivators as result of higher prices with proportionate[5] reaction on urban consumers, (4) some withholding from sale of available stocks for speculative reasons. Political troubles of autumn 1942 were also not without their effect on general economic dislocation.

7. Removal of price control on wheat in January last brought wheat to market and the situation was further temporarily eased by import of moderate quantity, 179 thousand tons, of wheat from Australia in first half of 1943. Meanwhile, simultaneously with inauguration of planned distribution of surpluses by Central Government, Bengal situation became acute with disappearance of rice stocks, phenomenal prices, and onset of famine conditions throughout large parts of province. This local situation was temporarily relieved by statutory removal of restrictions on inter-provincial movement of foodgrains in Eastern Provinces, but proposal to extend "free trade" over greater part of India met immediate opposition from all quarters. Central Government's distribution plan was prejudiced at outset by necessity for rescue operations for Bengal and backwardness of many administrations in procuring maximum surpluses for domestic use or export. Since Third Food Conference in July[6] greater appreciation of realities of situation seems to prevail, and administrations appear more disposed to recognise necessity for, (*a*) full effective application of Foodgrains Control Order, (*b*) a co-ordinated price policy, (*c*) efficiently

[1] No. 105. [2] 'no bottleneck for control' deciphered as 'no (? unusual) necessity for control'.
[3] 'will not readily' deciphered as '(? unless they)'. [4] 'and prospect of' was received corrupt.
[5] Decipher has 'disproportionate'. [6] See No. 27, note 1.

planned procurement of maximum surpluses, (*d*) cessation of all exports, combined with, (*e*) introduction of Urban Food Rationing progressively throughout India as soon as possible. These measures will, it is hoped, improve control, increase supply and secure limitation of demand. Long Term Planning Committee has just submitted its report and its conclusions are now under examination. They will be considered urgently in consultation with Provinces and States.

8. Given supply position, which is barely adequate even in most favourable circumstances, allied to dislocating economic factors referred to in paragraph 5 above, situation is bound to remain potentially dangerous for an indefinite time to come unless foodgrains, both wheat and rice, can be imported in very substantial quantities to form Buffer Stock, influencing both prices and flow of grain to market. It will be appreciated that alternatives of requisitioning on large scale from producers or introduction of rural rationing would in country of size, political composition and economic structure of India not be practical possibility, nor in terms of law and order desirable.

9. Situation in Bengal particularly is due in varying degrees to following causes: (1) partial failure of last winter rice crop, (2) cyclone devastation in districts normally surplus, (3) proximity to war zone and fears of invasion, (4) influx of refugees, (5) increased demands of industrial labour and labour engaged on military works, (6) loss of Burma rice, (7) denial policy involving removal of boats and rice stocks from coastal areas. Practical effect of last 2 items negligible since net Burma rice imports to Bengal only 100 thousand tons and less than 40 thousand tons denial rice moved and distributed elsewhere, but psychological effect was disproportionately great. Supplies received during "free trade" period from May to July and imported at instance of Central Government have served merely to keep Calcutta supplied on a hand-to-mouth basis with little or no effect on prices or on stocks in the districts. Acute shortage in districts has caused influx of destitute persons to Calcutta and in spite of Bengal Government's arrangements for Relief Camps, free feeding with gruel, i.e. soup made of vegetables and mixed foodgrains, and repatriation,[7] daily rate of mortality among these unfortunates has excited public feeling. Deaths reported in Calcutta during August 1943 were nearly double those in August 1942. Calcutta mortality figures in 1943 up to end of August show 30 per cent. increase over 1942 figures for the same period. No reliable estimate of deaths in districts available but famine conditions are reported to be widespread. Every effort is being made to despatch foodgrains to Calcutta, by rail and sea, but some limitation imposed by serious breach by flood of main East Indian Railway Line west of Calcutta. Autumn crop now coming on the market is reported good and may give some relief in districts but main crop is not harvested before December. Bengal Government have arranged purchasing machinery to secure

control over maximum surpluses. Quantity imported in Calcutta would be normally sufficient for feeding that city. At one pound cereals per head total quantity required would be about 1,500 (half 3,000) tons a day. Present rate of delivery exceeds 1,700 (half 3,400) tons, but part of this is required for districts. Many important industries feed their labour under their own arrangements out of stocks previously secured; accounting for about one million persons. Arrangements are being pressed on for introduction of Food Rationing in Calcutta but this not likely to materialise before November. Large proportion of foodgrains sent to Bengal is wheat and millets, to which population can only be gradually accustomed.

10. *Travancore/Cochin.* This heavily populated area depended almost entirely on rice from Burma and Malaya. Normal net deficit is about 470 thousand tons, of which only about one-sixth can be supplied out of declared surpluses of other areas. Procurement and distribution are however well-organised but on famine ration of five ozs. a day mixed grains with small supplementary ration for heavy manual workers and essential[8] services. Special anxiety felt over supplies to Rubber and Tea Estate workers but every effort is made to maintain regular and increased supplies of any grain available. Some relief will be obtained when small local crop is harvested this month.

11. *Bombay.*—Severe shortage amounting to famine conditions prevails in Deccan districts of Bombay and Deccan States owing to failure of last winter crops. Successful rationing scheme has been introduced in Bombay city and Poona and is to be extended elsewhere, with daily ration of just under one pound of foodgrains a day, but supply of rice at any rate sufficient to feed industrial labour is causing anxiety.

12. *Madras.*—Failure of monsoon[9] in two successive years has caused great distress in Deccan districts of Madras and involved drain on resources of rest of the province which previously reduced its stocks dangerously low in order to supply Ceylon and other neighbouring areas. Every effort is being made to supply millets and rice from outside but rate of supply is far short of requirements. Control of domestic resources of province by official agency is well organised and urban rationing is being introduced.

13. Please telegraph most immediate if any further details or elaboration of any point is required.

7 'repatriation' deciphered as '(? strained)'.
8 'essential' deciphered as 'loading'.
9 'monsoon' deciphered as '(? food)'.

122

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3298: f 112

MOST IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *19 September 1943, 9.40 pm*
Received: 20 September

21552. Your personal telegram 2069–S[1] Paragraph 13. I should be glad of general indication of present conditions in other Provinces and major States.

Is it true to say (1) that apart from Bengal, Bombay, Travancore, Cochin and Deccan districts of Madras, rural conditions are not such as would ordinarily cause remark (2) that shortage of supplies and high prices are causing anxiety in practically all larger towns?

[1] No. 121.

123

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

MOST IMMEDIATE

NEW DELHI, *20 September 1943, 10 pm*
Received: 20 September, 8.15 pm

No. 2088–S. Report of Long-term Food Policy Committee[1] originally presided over by Vigor and thereafter after Vigor's illness by Gregory, is being taken in Council tomorrow and is being discussed in Press conference tomorrow evening at 5 p.m., Indian time, conference being taken by Gregory. Report, as might be expected, very strongly urges necessity for imports. Report is of course in no way binding on us, but I am anxious that you should have this information in advance. Committee contained substantial non-official element including Purshottamdas Thakurdas, and general sense of its members that imports are quite vital is very widely known and could not now possibly be suppressed. In any event point will be very strongly urged during Press Conference.

2. I of course am anxious to cause minimum of embarrassment to His Majesty's Government. You and Cabinet are both aware of my views[2] and Commander-in-Chief's[3] as to vital importance of securing imports, and we neither of us can take responsibility for situation that in our judgement, unless there is unexpected improvement, is bound to arise if imports do not materialise. But we will handle matter here with utmost desire to avoid embarrassment to

His Majesty's Government. You may be certain however that clamour in Indian Press and from Indian public opinion for imports, already very strong, will be markedly increased by the report of this very representative Food Conference.

[1] *Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee 1943*, Food 2/2600 (Government of India Press, Simla, 1944). See also No. 347, Appendix II.
[2] See Nos. 39 and 78. [3] See No. 102.

124

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *20 September 1943, 10 pm*
Received: 20 September, 9 pm

No. 2089–S. I repeat in my immediately following telegram Rutherford's latest report which speaks for itself and on which I need not comment in any detail.

2. I think the suggestion in paragraph 3 for an amendment of Section 57 is well worth considering, and would be grateful for your reaction. Meanwhile I am asking my people to go into it. I appreciate objections to going to Parliament for any amendments, particularly an amendment of this type: and the giving of powers of this nature was certainly not in the minds of any of us when the Act was framed. On the other hand the Bengal situation is an excellent illustration of the possible value of powers of this character which might enable us to avoid going as far as Section 93 and would put the Governor in a position to carry certain responsibilities himself which Ministers may shrink from, and also to deal with problems arising out of interference by personalities such as Suhrawardy (Rutherford's present report clearly indicates to what extent these figure). A further merit, given the intensely communal aspect which this the Bengal issue increasingly presents, is that such amendment would probably please neither side.

125

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *20 September 1943, 11 pm*
Received: 20 September, 11 pm

No. 2090–S. Following telegram No. 160, dated 19th September, from Governor of Bengal, is repeated:—

Begins. This is in continuation of telegram No. 157,[1] September 15th. I have wandered round Calcutta after nightfall and scenes are pretty ghastly. I have also done a long mufti tour through 24-Parganas District where a number of relief centres is [are] functioning. Conditions outwardly are not so bad as in City but very large proportion of destitutes in City come from Parganas and nearby districts attracted by charity relief arrangements. The trouble in Parganas is largely due to cultivators owing to previous bad harvest not having enough grain to keep landless labour going till *aman* harvest and fear of what may happen to themselves should *aman* paddy crop be damaged. At present it looks very flourishing. The Cabinet decided to appoint a Relief Commissioner but Martin who has been chosen is very reluctant to serve if Suhrawardy has anything to do with it. Suhrawardy blames Revenue Minister for lack of adequate preparations for relief in districts but real trouble is provision of supplies to them and transport. I think Army will have to help in regard to latter. Ministry is being obstructive about forcible removal to outside camps of hordes of destitutes in Calcutta. Large supplies of wheat and wheat products are coming into Calcutta. It is the only place where wheat can be milled and mills cannot cope with incoming supplies. Bengal representative in the Punjab has now got programme I am assured for quota of supplies to deficit districts direct. One trouble however is that *atta* does not keep in this climate for any length of time. Rice is coming in scantily and the attempt to control prices is being defeated as far as possible by trading classes and bigger cultivators in so-called surplus areas keeping back such stocks as they have. I found plenty of *dal* and gram on sale in 24-Parganas village shops and huts but at high prices and rice invariably above control price. *Aus* paddy in small quantities on to (? the) market to (? at) controlled price.

It is correct that through excessive costs being calculated for handling and transport charges Government had up to date made about 30 lakhs profit on wheat imports but a reduction of price of *atta* to six annas a seer issue price and higher cost of United Provinces wheat will swallow this up and I contemplate if possible further reduction in order to help rice control prices. I think programme of reduction was too rapid but Suhrawardy thinks reverse and is contemplating advancing programme to target figure almost at once.

I would strongly press for immediate amendment of Section 57 so as to provide for Governor acting in his discretion in cases of grave emergency such as at present. Even if not used it will strengthen my hands and perhaps put more spirit into executive officers. Even if all the promised supplies of foodstuffs come through, I envisage a large death roll throughout the Province from starvation following on previous malnutrition coupled with endemic malaria during the next three and a half months. Though famine is not officially declared, the conditions are those of famine for landless labour in many areas and normal wreckage of population which subsists on charity.

The constant attacks on Ministry by Shyama Prasad Mukerji and his followers and publicity given to these attacks help to increase the panicky feelings that are abroad. Labour in jute-mill industries is being well looked after. There is likely to be trouble between Suhrawardy and Kirby over question of Government shops versus private retail shops in rationing scheme. Somebody has filled Suhrawardy up with idea that private shops have been a failure in Bombay. He quotes Purshottamdas Thakurdas in support and grain-trading classes have behaved so badly here that there is perhaps some justification for his attitude.

I have sent today a personal letter[2] suggesting a visit to Delhi. *Ends.*

[1] Not printed. [2] Not printed.

126

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMPORTANT *20 September 1943*
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 2096–S. Wavell's speech[1] has gone down very well indeed here generally speaking, and will afford an excellent background for his taking over. Comments reported from the home press suggest one small but important point to me which I will mention to Joyce when he arrives but which you might think worth consideration.

2. *Glasgow Herald*, as reported, has apparently read into Wavell's speech the prospect of early and substantial moves. The speech was in fact most carefully worded so as to leave his hands entirely free. I do not know who is now editor of the *Glasgow Herald*, but in the past it was always a very sensible paper, and I suggest that it might be worth watching it to keep it on the right lines, and

[1] Lord Wavell had spoken at a luncheon of the Pilgrims Society on 16 September.

that same is true of *The Scotsman* and papers such as the *Yorkshire Post* (though the latter's comment on Wavell's speech seems entirely appropriate).

3. I think it is worth considering also getting it across to those concerned in the press that those who urge an immediate attempt to break the existing deadlock are unaware that no full dress attempt could be made without great risk in present circumstances of exciting the strongest communal feeling; of state of things with Indian troops all over the world and the known condition in the Punjab of arms having been collected for future communal strife in many villages and areas; and that any outbreak of great strain of this nature might have swift and seriously damaging effect on fighting potential of Indian troops overseas. The point is naturally not one that would occur to the laymen in the press at home. But I am sure it is worth keeping before their eyes.

127

Government of India, Home Department to all Provincial Governments

L/P&J/8/681: ff 31–4

SECRET NEW DELHI, *20 September 1943*

No. 7/15/42–Poll. (I).

Sir,

The period since the removal, on July 23rd, 1942,[1] of the ban on the Communist Party of India has afforded an opportunity to judge the success or otherwise of the policy set forth in Home Department letter no. 7/2/42–Poll. (I), dated the 8th June 1942.[2] The activities of the Communist Party during this period, culminating in the recent Bombay Party Congress, have been comprehensively reviewed in the periodical surveys[3] issued by the Director, Intelligence Bureau, which are supplied to Provincial Criminal Investigation Departments; and it is not necessary therefore, to examine these activities in any detail. Before outlining the considerations on which Government's further policy towards the Communists should in our view be based, a very brief indication of what we conceive to be the salient features of Communist activity during this period may however be of value.

2. (a) *Communists and Congress*

Before the August rebellion the Communists denounced in their illegal publications the defeatism of Congress, as playing into the hands of the Axis. Subsequently, they have vociferously condemned the arrest of Mr. Gandhi and the Working Committee and have persistently demanded their release. These demands have been supported by a campaign for reconciliation between the

Congress and the Moslem League with the professed object of forming a National Government. The attacks on Government which have accompanied this propaganda in the Communist Press have undoubtedly at times been embarrassing and we are aware of the disquiet felt by some Provincial Governments on this score.

(b) *Students*: The Party has, as a whole, exercised a restraining effect on students, and its influence over the student community, though not great, has, such as it is, been used in the direction of preventing student strikes and disorderly demonstrations. This was notably the case during Mr. Gandhi's fast, when the comparative absence of serious trouble in the student community may in some small part be ascribed to Communist influence.

(c) *Labour*: The Party has made every effort to extend its influence with labour, though it is doubtful whether any great success has been achieved; certainly the Party's claims are exaggerated. Such influence as the Party has with labour appears generally to have been exercised in the direction of opposing or minimising the effect of strikes. There seems no doubt that the Communists continue to oppose any interruption of war production, including strikes, and it seems probable that cases in which local Communists have supported strikes were generally due to irresponsibility and lack of Party discipline.

(d) *Kisans and the food situation*: Alarmist reports regarding the food situation and criticism of Government's dealing with it have figured prominently in the Communist Press. The methods advocated by the Party for dealing with the food problem have not, however, been such as would cut across or interfere with the Government of India's policy in the matter as a whole, and no objection can be taken to the Party's general attitude on this subject, apart from the alarmist nature of its propaganda.

(e) *Army and services*: Not much progress appears to have been made in the Party's plans for the establishment of "cells" in the Army nor does the Communists' threat to the loyalty of the Army, the Police or other forces appear at present to be serious. While vigilance on this account by the Army and the Police cannot of course be relaxed, we are not aware of any serious grounds for anxiety at present.

(f) *Propaganda*: It is undoubtedly to the Party's propaganda activities during the period under review that the greatest objection can be taken and *People's War* in particular has frequently overstepped permissible bounds in its attacks on Government. The Party's pro-war propaganda has almost invariably been heavily interlarded with attacks on bureaucratic inefficiency, the effect of which must have detracted from the value of its condemnation of sabotage and fifth columnists. Any judgment of the Party's propaganda must, however, in our opinion, take a broad view of the period as a whole. At the time of the legalisation of the Party, a Japanese invasion of India seemed imminent and, in a generally defeatist atmosphere, the Communists were almost the only political

[1] See Vol. II, No. 271, note 2. [2] L/P&J/8/681: ff 72–3. [3] Not printed.

party which stood for resistance to the aggressor; apprehended mistrust on the part of the public of the reasons for the release of Communists and of their apparently pro-Government attitude led to an increasing admixture of anti-Government "seasoning" in their pro-war propaganda; the Congress rebellion then faced the Party with the alternatives of open opposition to Congress, for which they were not strong enough, or support of the Congress leaders, the latter alternative being chosen; later, improvement in the war situation provided a breathing space in which the party could concentrate on internal organisation and expansion; finally, increasing confidence in its own strength has produced a tendency for the Party to resume its pro-war and anti-Congress propaganda.

(g) *Party Discipline*: The party has always numbered in its ranks persons who, although calling themselves Communists, pay the merest lip service to true Communist theories and are solely interested in the speedy and violent overthrow of British rule in India. These persons, mostly ex-terrorists and revolutionaries, pay scant attention to Party directives and have made little or no effort to assimilate and follow the Party's pro-war policy. The Central directorate claims to enforce strict Party discipline but here again its claims are exaggerated. Indeed the recent efforts of the Party to increase its paper strength may well have resulted in the inclusion of a number of persons of this type who profess communism as a cloak to hide other more nefarious activities.

3. The period under review culminated in the Party Congress held in Bombay from May 23rd to June 1st 1943. The principal outcome of the Congress was the adoption of a new Constitution for the Party and the passage of a political resolution. The new Constitution, replacing the one drawn up in 1939, is designed, in contrast to its precursor, as the basis of a *legal* political Party; it makes no mention of any illegal Party Organization; and it is thus a measure of the Party's confidence in its newly found legal status. The preamble most significantly omits any reference to the notorious "Draft Platform of Action" prescribing the violent overthrow of British rule in India by a revolution based on the Russian model, which was formerly the central plank of Communist policy in this country. Instead the Party now seeks to build a "National United Front of the entire freedom-loving people of India for the defence of the country from Fascist aggression and for its liberation from Imperialist enslavement", for which purpose constitutional methods are presumably not debarred. The Political Resolution re-affirms that the war is a "people's war" against Fascism and that the freedom of India depends on its outcome. It then proceeds to discuss the "National Crisis" and though the usual criticism of bureaucratic repression is present, it is on this occasion leavened by an attack on the negative policy of the Congress and the Resolution openly indentifies, for the first time, the Congress Socialist Party and the Forward Bloc with the Fifth Column

agents who are accused of taking advantage of the Congress Resolution of August, 1942, to lead the country to the brink of disaster. Most striking of all, however, are the admissions made in the Resolution of serious flaws in the Party's policy since August, 1942. It is admitted that Communists concentrated on "wordy abuse" of the bureaucracy while failing to expose the "negative and defeatist policy" of the National leadership; that during the campaign for the release of political prisoners there was a tendency to overemphasize the repression theme; and that, in its food campaign, the Party aimed at the exposure of bureaucratic inefficiency rather than at constructive action, oblivious of the fact that such propaganda "leads not to food but to riots".

4. It is clear that during the period under review, the Communists' principal preoccupation has been to increase the strength of their Party. There is no doubt that they have achieved some success in this though the published figures of Party membership are doubtless exaggerated; with this success has come a spirit of confidence which was reflected in the Bombay Congress and the effect of which must, in our opinion, be good. Most of the objectionable manifestations of Party policy hitherto—their hesitancy in condemning Congress; their support of the leading national figures, particularly Mr. Gandhi; and above all, their persistent vituperation of Government, even when the latter's aims differed little from their own—can be plausibly, if not justifiably, attributed to their paramount need to build up the party strength. As that strength increases, the need for such divagations from a truly Communist policy may decrease; and the Bombay Communist Congress, with its open criticism of the Congress Party, whether or not it heralds such an era of independent Communist policy, clearly revealed a marked improvement in the Party outlook.

5. The activities of the Communist Party may be judged from two very different aspects, which we shall for present purposes call the long-term and short-term views. The long-term view must be taken as embracing the probable course of events after the war and from this point of view the fundamentally opportunist character of the Party must not be lost sight of. It is primarily a Nationalist Party working for Indian independence notwithstanding its lip-service to Internationalism; and a large proportion of its members are attracted to its fold because it stands for the overthrow of British rule. It is not difficult then to conceive of circumstances *post bellum* in which, with Russia looking towards India, a strong and well organised Communist Party in India might be a serious menace. There is on the other hand little to suggest at present that the aims of the Communist Party of India will conflict with the policy of His Majesty's Government to a greater degree than those of any other Indian Party. Indeed there are reasons for welcoming the development of a Party basing its policy upon a positive attitude towards economic problems, rather than, as is the case of the major parties, on narrow and outmoded racial and communal

antipathies. Further, though the Communists have not hitherto come far into the open in opposition to Congress, it is evident that the two parties cannot travel the whole length of the road together and, in particular, that the Communists are more likely than any other party to come into conflict with the moneyed interests which are at present behind the Congress. On a short-term view, the ruling criterion must clearly remain the Communists' attitude to the war (even if that attitude is itself opportunist in character) and the effect of the Party's activities on the war effort. It is Government's prime duty to create and preserve the internal conditions which are necessary for the successful defence of India and the victorious prosecution of the war; and we have to take into consideration the fundamental fact that the major obstacle with which we are faced in this task is the anti-war and defeatist attitude of the Congress. Not only are the Communists almost the only Party who openly preach that this is a "People's war" in which wherever it is fought, victory is an end in which every citizen should be interested; they alone, however hesitantly, have criticised Congress defeatism from a political point of view (as opposed, for instance, to the fundamentally communal criticisms of Congress policy voiced by the Moslem League etc.) and have openly attacked as traitors the offshoots of Congress, the Forward Bloc and the Congress Socialist Party. The brief review of the Party's activities given in the preceding paragraph should indicate that, leaving aside the irresponsible behaviour of individual Communists who have refused or failed to submit to Party discipline, it is principally in its propaganda that the Party has given real cause for anxiety since its legalisation, and that there is little in the aims underlying its Unity, Labour, and Food campaigns to which serious exception need be taken.

6. The considerations of long-term policy set forth above are not in our view conclusive either for or against the Communist Party, and probably the most that can be said on this score is that their very inconclusiveness strengthens the view that Communist policy should for the present be judged on its short-term merits. On the short-term view, we consider that events during the period under review have, even taking into consideration the many objectionable features of Communist propaganda and the subversive activities of individual Communist supporters, largely justified the policy enunciated in paragraph 2 of our letter of the 8th June, 1942, namely of allowing freedom of action to the adherents of any party in India prepared to help the prosecution of the war and to form a makeweight to the defeatist tactics of Congress. These two objects remain the principal criteria on which the success or otherwise of our policy in dealing with the Communist[s] must be judged; and our conclusion is that for the present the attitude to be adopted towards the Party must be one of neutrality. On the one hand, there is no reason to accord to Communists any privileges or immunity which members of other legal political parties do not

enjoy. On the other hand there should be no discrimination against them merely on the basis of their past record and members of the Party should not be regarded with suspicion or arrested merely because they are Communists. In so far, however, as the activities of individual Communists constitute a danger to the internal peace of the country, firm action must be taken to moderate or if necessary to repress them.

7. The main difficulty in applying this policy is likely to arise from the tone adopted by Communist propaganda. It is clearly impossible to expect Communists to adopt a wholly loyalist attitude; as Communists and Nationalists they are fundamentally opposed to "Imperialist domination". As pointed out earlier in this letter, however, the vilification of Government which has hitherto unfortunately played such a prominent part in Communist propaganda has been in large measure due to their need to retain a national and popular appeal in order to increase the strength of the Party; and it may be that, as the Party becomes more solidly established, this anti-Government bias will decline. This hope is strengthened by the increasingly satisfactory tone of recent issues of *People's War*. Serious efforts are evidently being made to free *People's War* from the "Left Nationalist Deviation" to which we referred in paragraph 4 above, with the result that the latest issues of the paper have contained outspoken condemnations of all forms of hoarding, exploitation and sabotage, while being at the same time much more free from criticism of Government. On the other hand it has been revealed that Communists still feel that, despite the lifting of the ban on the Party, they are looked upon as outcasts or regarded with undue suspicion, and are generally cold-shouldered by Government and its officers; this in turn tends to aggravate the tone taken by their propaganda. The existence of this feeling, whatever the foundation may be for it, in itself implies a desire on the part of the Communists to maintain good relations with Government and to deserve the Government's confidence. Nothing but good can come of encouraging such a desire and responding to it so far as their own action makes it possible to do so; and we suggest that this can best be done by personal contacts between the higher officers of Provincial Governments and leading members of the Communist Party. We are aware that such personal relations have been established in some Provinces, and we think they might with advantage be extended as likely to lead to better understanding on both sides. Such occasions could at any time be used to convey an informal warning where the activities of Communists seemed likely to overstep the mark or to indicate directions in which their avowed object of helping the war effort could more usefully be pursued.

8. To summarise briefly. We consider that the Party's activities since its legalisation in July, 1942, have despite the frequently objectionable nature of Communist propaganda, largely justified the policy laid down in our letter of

8th June, 1942, based on the view that the responsible members of the Party are at heart genuinely pro-war and anti-Fascist. We consider that an attitude of neutrality should be adopted by Government to the Party and that the activities of its members should be judged in the light of whether they tend to assist or to obstruct the prosecution of the war. Any activities which tend to assist the war effort should be encouraged e.g. it might be possible to supply suitable material for publication in the Communist journals or for use by them in their propaganda. We do not wish any sort of immunity from legal action to be conferred on Communists nor, on the other hand, do we wish discrimination to be exercised against them merely owing to their membership of the Party. The Party's propaganda activities will, equally, not be immune from the law; we believe, however, that a useful moderating effect will be achieved by personal contact between the officers of Government and leading members of the Party and we urge that the fullest use should be made of such contacts. We consider it desirable that District Officers should be made fully aware of the policy of Government towards Communists so that the intentions of Government may not be thwarted by well-meant but ill-informed action on the part of local authorities.

I have
the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

R. TOTTENHAM
Secretary to the Government of India[4]

[4] A similar letter, No. 12/1/43-Poll (I) of 15 October, was sent by the G. of I. Home Dept. to Provincial Governments on the treatment of the Bolshevik Party of India. L/P&J/8/681: ff 26–7.

128

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/6/108a: ff 75–7

INDIA OFFICE, *20 September 1943*

My dear Archie,
Herewith some suggested amendments for your revised draft,[1] which you and Jenkins might consider dovetailing in with others you may already be making.

I think it essential that we should show a united front when the matter comes before the War Cabinet now and still more when you think the time has come for raising it at the Indian end. I am certain that the War Cabinet will not give you an unlimited discretion to act on any preliminary approval they give you now, without at any rate some reference to them when the time comes. So I

would make a virtue of necessity by emphasising the point both in your revised draft (I have made a suggestion to that effect) and in anything you may way [? lay] later before the Cabinet.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

Enclosure to No. 128

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR REVISED DRAFT

Paragraph 2. The last sentence about Dominion Status is not really necessary and it adds nothing to the argument. We have already said through Cripps most explicitly that India, once established, can secede. Also the paragraph would annoy the Prime Minister.

Paragraph 5, as it stands, with its reference to myself and with its sub-headings, not only makes too much of the matter, but suggests a divergence of views, which is not the case. It is essential that the Cabinet should feel that I stand behind your proposals. What I suggest is something as follows: "It may be suggested that, without tackling the main issue, some advance might be made by such steps as a further Indianization of the Executive or by setting up some expert body to make a preliminary path-finding investigation of the constitution problem. There is much in favour of these proposals, etc." The suggestion about the status of the Agent-General is too small a matter to be worth mentioning at all. That would involve omitting the second sentence on page 3 beginning with the words "Changes such as".[2]

Paragraph 12, last sentence but one, should, I think, end something as follows: "They would, if they accepted the preliminary conditions of the discussion, have to be released unconditionally, i.e. remain at liberty whether the discussion succeeded or failed". I think it important to make it clear that the unconditional release would only take place if they accepted the preliminary conditions of the discussion.

Paragraph 17 (i). Instead of "immediate aim" I should be inclined to say "the aim of our policy in India the establishment in the immediate or at any rate near future of a Coalition Government etc." I think it important from the War Cabinet point of view that you should not be seeming to rush them as to date. The great thing is to secure from them a reasonable discretion to take the initiative when you think the situation makes it possible. In any case the Cabinet will want you to consult them when the times comes and I should be inclined to include in (iii) something to this effect: "that the time when I should ask for definite Cabinet approval to my making an appeal on these lines etc."

[1] Of Enclosure to No. 116. [2] i.e. p. 259 lines 14–16.

ANNEXURE A

Paragraph 2, line 4. For "are still open etc." read "continue to remain open to discussion. It may indeed prove that in the friendly atmosphere of a working partnership that discussion might make useful progress."

Second sub-paragraph, last line. "There are three tasks immediately confronting any Government to-day." If you exclude reference to the preparing of the constitution as one of the tasks assigned to the Coalition Government I think the word "immediate" ought to come in. I have no doubt whatever in my mind that imposing the preparation of the constitution on the Coalition Government would wreck things from the start, because everything would then turn round the communal representation in the Executive and Jinnah would certainly not go in unless he were in a position to veto everything. The whole atmosphere of the work would be vitiated by the constitutional issue. On the other hand, if that is not their definite task and they get together on other matters they may well presently begin to discuss the constitution informally and possibly even do something effective about it.

Last sub-paragraph but one. Omit the sentence beginning "But the fourth task etc."

Last sub-paragraph. For "nominated" I would suggest "trusted by" or better still perhaps "recognised as such".

Paragraph 3, top line. Before "conditions" insert "preliminary".

Sub-paragraph (4). I would suggest omitting the second sentence as unnecessary and weakening the argument.

Line 9, after "intervene" I would suggest inserting something as follows: "Moreover there is no agreed constitution in existence defining where the ultimate responsibility rests, and in its absence it must fall upon me to see to it that the issue of what that constitution shall be is not prejudged". It is, I think, essential to bring out that your reserve powers include that of preventing a majority at the Council starting action definitely prejudging such an issue as, say, Pakistan, and so precipitating a split and serious trouble afterwards. For the same reason I would substitute for sub-paragraph (8) something of this kind: "The future constitutional settlement must be based on agreement between the main elements in India's national life. There can be no question of any main area in British India in which Moslems are predominant being coerced into acceding to a constitution which they are not prepared to accept, any more than there can be any question of coercing the Indian States into accession. On the other hand, disagreement with a constitution acceptable to the majority of the peoples and provinces of British India cannot be allowed indefinitely to postpone the attainment of full freedom by that majority". This would meet Anderson's point that an interim Government can only succeed if the main underlying principle of the future settlement is accepted on both sides. Without

something of this sort Jinnah would be unlikely to join in the discussions. In any case the discussions would be unfruitful and we should be under the disadvantage both of having failed and of having unconditionally released Gandhi & Co. It seems to me therefore important that acceptance of the broad principle of a constitution settled by agreement should be one of the preliminary conditions accepted by the Congress leaders before they are released for discussion. As a matter of fact they have already gone a pretty long way in that direction.

Paragraph 4 (b) For "to prepare a definite plan" I would suggest "with a view to coming to agreement on the formation of a War Government". The wording as it stands might suggest that it was a plan for the future constitution that they were to discuss.

Bottom sub-paragraph, line 3.[3] I would suggest "My plan leaves this question of method entirely open, subject always to the main condition laid down in (8) above." Unless this is made clear Jinnah will raise the issue at once.

line 7, for "the Coalition Government" read "any party". The last sentence of the sub-paragraph could be omitted as covered by previous amendments.

page 8, line 2,[4] after "would" I should insert "after notifying me of their willingness to take part in the discussion on the conditions above laid down." I do not think you could be too careful in being precise on this point.

[3] i.e. p. 266 line 39 in this Vol. [4] i.e. p. 267 line 8.

129

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *20 September 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 8th September[1] which I was very glad to get. As you say our correspondence is now beginning to draw to an end, and this is one of the last letters in the series. I am delighted to think that you have had a little break and hope that it has done you good. I shall be by no means sorry, as you may imagine, to escape from the quite abnormal pressure under which I have been working lately, and to be rid of my present burdens.

2. I am by no means happy about Jack Herbert's condition. I should have expected him by now to be rather further advanced towards that stage in his improvement which the doctors insist he should reach before they can perform

[1] No. 103.

this operation for appendicitis. But the bulletins are still somewhat disquieting with their references to continued weakness, and I understand that he still tends to get a temperature every afternoon. What does emerge more and more clearly is that there could in any event be little prospect of his undertaking any heavy responsibility for some considerable time to come. It is a great relief to think that Lady Mary is with him—she has great courage and I am sure that she has been invaluable to him in giving him confidence.

3. I thought I had better send you a telegram,[2] now that Winston is back, in case this question of the permanent succession in Bengal should come up at short notice, to comment on the candidates you mention in paragraph 2 of your letter. I do not think I have anything to add here, save that it would be quite disastrous were we to put people purely for party reasons into posts so critically important as Bengal is at the present moment, and that Lawson, while excellent company and in his own way amusing, would not, in my judgment, have any of the qualities that are required. Lawson's forte is self-expression, in which he is quite untiring! One needs a keen and active brain, some experience of administration, and a very considerable readiness to try to get down to the roots of the matter oneself.

4. I have telegraphed[3] to you at length (I thought it better to try to cover the ground in a single telegram) about my correspondence with Lady Mary about Jack Herbert's relief. As I said in that telegram I am a shade uneasy at the possibility of criticism on the ground that we are paying two men at the rate of Rs. 10,000 a month each for doing the same job: and while that may be a defensible position for three or four weeks it becomes exceedingly difficult to explain away if the period runs to three or four months. My own strong feeling therefore is that we ought to face up to it (with of course the consent of Mary Herbert and Jack Herbert) and at a suitable moment, but preferably before I hand over myself, announce that Jack Herbert has tendered his resignation on grounds of ill-health.

5. I am well content with the way Rutherford is shaping. I get a stronger impression of a slight revival of confidence in Bengal, and it is obvious that he is very concerned to see things for himself. His telegrams have not been very encouraging, but they do give a very valuable picture of the situation. I am asking my people here to take up at once from the technical point of view the suggestion[4] that Section 57 might be amended so as to enable the Governor in a situation such as the present to take certain action in his discretion. The last thing any of us want to do either here or elsewhere is to see a breakdown of the normal parliamentary machine and to have to resort to Section 93 and (though I dictate this without having had time to think the matter out) I think that if we could get Parliament to agree to such an amendment of Section 57, it might

be a very useful half-way house both now in Bengal and conceivably in other situations in future.

6. I am very well satisfied with the way Hutchings has settled into the Food Department, and I think he should be very useful there. Srivastava goes up and down and some days is well below his best form. But he is working hard and I think Hutchings is quite well pleased with him. One of our principal problems for the moment is the somewhat intransigeant attitude of the Punjab. I will send you by this bag copy of a note[5] by Hutchings commenting on a discussion with the Premier, Sir Chhotu Ram, and Sardar Baldev Singh, a couple of days ago. I sympathise with the Punjab Ministers to the extent that they have got to get across to their constituents the case for parting with grain at a time when the press is full of suggestions that the Bengal Government are making a substantial profit by buying at say 11 and selling at say 17: and one's conscience is more uneasy since it does now in fact prove that Bengal have made a profit of some 30 lakhs on wheat prices recently. But, just as in Bengal itself there is singularly little sign of any public spirit, and the chief anxiety of individuals, whether rich or poor, seems to be to build up a reserve for themselves, so in the Punjab we have the difficult position of a Ministry and an electorate presenting a solid front to the rest of the world on the basis that they are not going to sell below a certain figure whatever may happen! Nor is that solid Punjab front too easy to make an impression on. I doubt very much our getting any very great distance even under a Section 93 government in the matter of requisitioning with the whole governmental machine and the populace against us, and any question of issuing a direction to the Provincial Government such as might bring down the collapse of the only smoothly working ministry in India raises important political issues. I have not had a very great deal of assistance from the Finance Department. Raisman tells me that he cannot accept responsibility for any financial concession to the Punjab, and feels that either they must be directed to agree to requisitioning or else that His Majesty's Government, if they are to be left as they are, must fill the gap. That is all very well, but the position is not quite so simple as all that.

7. Mountbatten, as you know, is due here on the 30th. I go up to Simla myself on the night of the 21st and will come down on the 29th for a couple of days discussion with him. I have suggested to Rutherford that he should also come up at about that time, so that we can take stock of how things are going in Bengal. I am glad that Dr. Soong is coming to meet Mountbatten—I am sure it will be appreciated and it starts things off on the right foot.

[2] 2087–S of 20 September. It opposed the appointment of Mr Lawson on the lines of this para. and suggested Lord Wakehurst or Mr Assheton. L/PO/8/31.

[3] This telegram has not been traced in the India Office Records. A copy of a letter of 12 September from Lord Linlithgow to Lady Herbert is on L/PO/8/31.

[4] See No. 125. [5] Not printed.

8. I wholly agree with all you say in paragraph 6 of your letter about Auchinleck and the South-East Asia Command.

* * *

10. Nothing further has developed about South Africa. I had a long talk with Shafa'at Ahmad Khan on his arrival two or three days ago: but nothing emerged out of it of any importance that is not available to you already. The matter has not again come up in Council and enquiries as to what is involved in retaliation are proceeding actively departmentally. The longer that process can continue in some ways the better, for it means that the temperature keeps down.

11. Many thanks for the comments in paragraph 11 of your letter about arrangements in connection with a possible fast by Gandhi. We must leave the detail of our plans until nearer the time and until we know what the circumstances surrounding a further fast may be. I hope that the Mahatma will postpone action until I have left these shores, though that may be a somewhat selfish wish! I do not feel much doubt that the old man, who, though he may have made his mistakes, is exceedingly alert, will ponder very carefully the arguments on both sides before he does decide to fast again, for after the failure of his attempt to work up feeling last February he can only hope to make a real success of a fast now if he is sincerely determined to make it a fast to death. If that were to be the case it goes without saying that a very great deal of emotion and excitement, press interest, &c. would be generated without the least delay. But were the Mahatma, having announced his intention of a real fast of that nature, then to convert it into a partial fast, or one relieved by the administration of sweet lime or the like, the damage to his prestige could not but be, I believe, very considerable. And if the fast were pressed to the point of death, and if no sustenance of any kind were to be taken, the end would come so soon that Congress would not have much time in which to play upon the emotional response of the public.

12. I am glad you liked Sultan Ahmed's speech to the National War Front. I am not quite sure whether it was his own composition or not. But I wholly agree with you as to the desirability of making Council talk in public as much as possible. I have found it singularly reluctant to do so, though I have not failed to urge them to use the opportunities that are open to them and though they know that so far as assistance in the way of material, suitable times, suitable platforms, &c., is concerned, all that assistance is at their disposal. Now and then one gets a really good and telling speech—thus there was a good speech some months ago by Firoz which attracted a great deal of attention. This speech of Sultan Ahmed's is, as you say, a competent piece of work. And there have been one or two others. But partly I suppose because the background

and the setting are so different from the setting at home, there has been nothing like the endeavour one would be entitled to expect to take advantage of opportunties afforded by the platform to get either a general case or particular points of view across.

* * *

16. From this unsavoury subject[6] we passed on to the question of the position in Bengal. After a few words about its difficulty he went immediately on to say that many people argued that Government must take over control. I asked him whether he meant the Central Government, and if so whether he had in view Section 93? That, he said, was exactly what he had in view. Not without some satisfaction at finding the Metropolitan so ready to overlook the constitutional implications, I replied that the suggestion he had made to me was a very grave one. Did he contemplate that the municipality should also be brought under official control? He said that Calcutta was in a shocking condition and that here, too, it was widely suggested that it should be taken over. I put it to him that in the municipality and the Bengal Government one was dealing with two institutions which were entirely under non-official Indian control. It might well be that good results could be achieved were they in fact taken over. But what would clearly emerge when it proved that at a moment when either of them had to carry responsibility that mattered they had failed? Not only would it be a most severe reflection on the immediate capacity of the public men of the Province to carry the normal burdens of politics or administration: but the inference that could not fail to be drawn would be most damaging to the idea of Indian self-government. This approach completely took the wind out of the Metropolitan's sails. He repeated that the municipality was a vile body. I pointed out that it had after all been in untrammelled non-official hands since about 1923 and that I felt he would agree that it would be a very grave sin so far as its capacity to conduct affairs was concerned were we to take it over. The Metropolitan finding that he had taken himself a great deal further than he had at first suspected, said he quite agreed that it was essential to give Indian non-officials, whether in the municipality or in the government, time to learn by experience. I told him that that being so it was impossible for me to listen to him or to others urging that we should light-heartedly see the Province go into Section 93; and that represented not only my inclination but my duty to His Majesty's Government who had been anxious to see India self-governing as soon as possible; and that one had to be careful in those circumstances when one discussed certain things or certain remedies for them even with someone of the experience of the Metropolitan. We parted on excellent terms, with some mild satisfaction on my side that in my concluding interview with him the

[6] In para. 15 Lord Linlithgow had given an account of a discussion with the Metropolitan of India on brothels in Calcutta.

Governor-General should have appeared as an apostle of progress and the Metropolitan as an advocate of reaction!

* * *

18. I send by this bag copies of a letter from Hennessy in Washington and a letter from the wife of the British Consul in Boston enclosed in it.[7] It rather suggests, if the impressions recorded in it are correct, that Phillips is still somewhat woolly-minded about the true position in this country and thinks it is a great deal simpler than in fact unfortunately it is. It is just as well however that you should see this letter for what it is worth.

* * *

21 September 1943

22. We spent a long time, as we do on every occasion that Council meets, in Council this morning on the food problem. I found them very sore indeed over the matter of imports, and there was indeed talk of a formal protest to His Majesty's Government by the Council to the effect that, while every possible emphasis had been laid on behalf of the Government of India on the vital necessity of imports, and while His Majesty's Government have completely refused to consider their representations, they now find themselves exposed to severe and undeserved criticism in the press on the ground that they are not really applying themselves to the matter. I diverted them from taking any immediate action of this kind: but I should not be surprised if in another week or so you did get a formal protest to the Cabinet from the Government of India, and if we did not find ourselves under pressure to make public that we had represented in the strongest terms to His Majesty's Government that there must be imports, and that it was only by imports that the situation could be met, but that in reply we had been told that His Majesty's Government refused to give any assistance of this nature. This point is bound to come up almost immediately in connection with the report of Gregory's Food Committee about which I telegraphed to you yesterday,[8] and a summary of which will be released to the press today. It was very clear indeed from the line taken in Council by my Indian colleagues today that the psychological importance attaching to the provision of these substantial imports or even a promise of them is if anything greater than we have always been given to understand that it was, and there seems little hope without something of this order of really affecting the attitude of the Punjab cultivator and the Punjab Government to make stocks available from their relative local abundance.

23. I should go on to say that the Punjab came under very severe criticism indeed in Council: and indeed I am bound to say that I am driven to the conclusion that the Punjab Ministry are deeply in this business, and that what that Province, whether the Ministry or the cultivator, are concerned to do is (though this is rather a hard thing to say) to screw the last penny of profit out of the

Central Government and out of the starving peasant in Bengal. Characteristically no other considerations enter into their calculations. On the other hand, as I have said earlier in this letter, they are in a very strong position, given the solidarity of interest between the Ministry and the cultivator, and the extreme care with which one has to consider steps which would lead to the resignation of a government which has on the whole been much the most successful parliamentary government in India. And those political difficulties are further complicated by the communal issue, and by the undesirability of taking on the Muslim League so far as they could make up a grievance. Moreover, I have very little doubt that if a policy of active requisition, backed where necessary by force were to follow, there would be something very like an agrarian revolution in the Province. Apart from that there has of course to be considered the reaction on the very large numbers of the Punjab soldiers of every religion and community who are serving overseas of the receipt of letters from the Province representing that their houses were being invaded, and their families insulted, under the pretext of requisitioning, and that their legitimate claims out of food profits were being taken from them. We may very well have to face up to the resignation of the Punjab Government—indeed there have been times recently when I have thought the risk of that contingency much more marked than in the case even of Bengal. But a decision to bring pressure over the food issue to bear on the Punjab to such an extent that if the Ministry decided to refuse to obey our instructions and resignation might be inevitable is one to be taken with very great care and only as a last resort, and I am sorry, that being so, to find a disposition on the part of certain of the London papers and in particular the *Manchester Guardian* (no doubt under the inspiration of Shiva Rao, whose anxiety would be to get rid of the Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab), and even *The Times*, to take much more lightly than I think circumstances justify the possibility, and the implications, of a change of this nature. It is a little distressing, too, in the same connection to see how little appreciation the press at home have of what is involved in action of the type in view. They seem to be under the impression that it is very much like an instruction from the Ministry of Health to an offending local body! You and I know only too well that it is nothing of the sort, and that very much deeper issues have to be faced.

24. I send you by this bag the summary[9] of the recommendations of Gregory's Committee. I understand that a copy has been sent direct to Jenkins for Wavell.

[7] The reference is to No. 80. Mrs Hendy was not the wife of the British Consul but worked in the Consulate in Boston.

[8] No. 123. [9] Not printed.

130

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3298: f 114

MOST IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *21 September 1943, 11.55 pm*
Received: 21 September, 9.45 pm

2106–S. Your personal telegram of September 19th 21552.[1] Generally the position in the Provinces and States other than those mentioned in my telegram 2069–S[2] of September 18th is not so serious but particular areas in these Provinces and States also, such as coalfields and industrial area round Jamshedpur in Bihar, Indore in Kharegat [*sic*] States and Mysore including Bangalore, which have large requirements of foodgrains owing to special concentration of population, are experiencing severe shortages of particular foodgrains such as wheat and rice and are in a constant state of anxiety.

2. To the seriously deficit areas mentioned in previous telegram Vizagapatam district of Madras should be added.

3. The pressure on Punjab and Sind for supply of unusually large quantities of wheat to Bengal and Travancore and Cochin in substitution of rice has increased to such a degree that in consequence it has not been possible to allot adequate quantities to other deficit areas. Also as a rise in prices has been general in country, persons with fixed incomes and wages in all parts of the country and those who have only subsistence margins of income are everywhere in difficulties.

4. Conditions in rural areas in parts of India other that (sic ? than) the most seriously affected areas have also deteriorated to extent that high prices have caused distress among the non-producing sections of the rural population whose increased earnings have not kept pace with the rising prices. While it is generally correct to say that distress in such rural areas in [is] not so serious as in urban areas, it is certain that uncertainty of supplies and high prices are causing anxiety in practically all large towns even those situated in surplus producing areas.

[1] No. 122. [2] No. 121.

131

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 272

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *22 September 1943*

2107–S. Manuscript letter dated September 19th[1] received to-day from Rutherford shows that he has a good deal to contend with [?in] local difficulties but confirms my impression that he is getting hold of the situation well though it is obvious that Ministry and not least of them Suhrawardy are a difficulty. He comments that he is coming round to the conclusion that "If it can legally be done (which I doubt) we should have Section 93 for the present food and *military* situation with preferably *non-official* advisers" and adds that he does not find so far any of senior officers except Stevens outstanding enough for these posts. Better still he would prefer amendment of Section 57 "so that I can order instead of having to persuade." The latter would greatly strengthen my hands even if not used. Please press that on Cabinet.[2]

2. I have already passed on to you his telegram[3] received before his letter, suggesting an amendment of Section 57. That is still under examination here. I look forward with very great interest to your own reactions to it. I am asking him to come up as early as he conveniently can and hope to see him in last few days of this month.

[1] Not printed.

[2] Mr Turnbull noted 'I am not very clear whether the last sentence of para. 1 is reporting Sir T. R.[utherford] or is the Viceroy's comment, but from para. 2 I think it must be the former.'

[3] No. 125.

132

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 411

L/E/8/3297: ff 111–12

Economic Situation in India

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *22 September 1943*

The Chiefs of Staff, in their Memorandum W.P. (43) 407,[1] have supported to the War Cabinet the very urgent renewal by the Commander-in-Chief, India,[2] of the Viceroy's call[3] for help in the form of import of half a million tons of

[1] No. 119. [2] No. 102. [3] No. 39.

food grains between now and February 1944. Their memorandum recalls the previous decisions of the War Cabinet (W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions)[4] to limit imports to 50,000 tons of wheat (to be sent from Australia to Colombo "for orders") and 100,000 tons of barley to India from Iraq, subject in the latter case to possibility of supply.

Arrangements for 30,000 tons of wheat from Australia have so far been made, and for 5,000 tons from the United States, together with a somewhat problematical provision for Iraqi barley. There have also been offers of wheat and rice from American sources: in the light of the Cabinet decision these have had to be discouraged. Meanwhile the position in India has developed as the Viceroy anticipated, and the fourth quarter of the year leading up to the main rice harvest about Christmas lies before us with singularly little reason to anticipate improvement of the situation before its end. Over India as a whole there has not been much change in the food position; it is still one of grave anxiety in the cities, with comparative sufficiency for the peasant producer—some 50,000,000—in most rural areas, but high prices and resultant wide-spread hardship for salaried and wage-earning classes everywhere. The conditions for improvement remain the same, namely, control by the Central Government over a sufficient reserve or buffer stock of food grains to enable them to bring prices down and to convince the 50,000,000 peasant producers that there is nothing to be gained by holding their surplus back. For that reserve there is no present available source other than import on a large scale; and such import is the only practical means of persuading the peasant.

Meanwhile the Central Government has been taking such steps as are open to it to meet the day-to-day situation. Bombay City started rationing in May and the plans have worked. Plans on a similar basis are being put into operation for 70 of the larger cities; but the administrative problem presented remains a difficult one, for trained personnel is lacking and the adviser lent by the Ministry of Food has a great deal of ground to cover.

Bengal is still the main danger spot. It has to be recognised that neither the Provincial Government, which is a Moslem–Hindu coalition, nor the Calcutta Corporation, which is controlled by the Congress and has become increasingly inefficient and corrupt, have proved themselves equal to the situation. The acting Governor (who assumed office only on the 4th September) is taking vigorous action: the Central Government are supporting him in his measures in whatever ways are open to it and are prepared to intervene further. Nevertheless, the fact is to be faced that there are famine conditions in some of the Eastern Districts and that in Calcutta hundreds are dying of starvation, although grain is now coming into the City in a quantity sufficient, if well distributed, to feed its population on a tolerable ration scale. The position is saved from becoming worse than it is by the large proportion of the working population which is being fed through the efforts of industrial concerns. As to other danger

areas, supplies are being sent to Travancore and Cochin, two of the chief sufferers from the loss of Burma imports, and also to parts of Madras, where exports for Ceylon (which relied on Burma for some 360,000 tons of rice annually, and whose loss of this supply it fell to S. India to try to make good) and elsewhere have proved too heavy a drain on local supplies and have led to serious shortage.

So far there has been no widespread disorder and it might be suggested that since the situation is for the moment being held without the imported supplies the Viceroy asks for, the necessity for imported supplies no longer exists. I wish to impress upon my colleagues, firstly, that the present position in Bengal is a very grim one, and, secondly, that the worst point is yet to come. The new crops are said to be doing well over most of India; but the main rice crop is not harvested till the end of the year and the millets only a little earlier, so that for the next three months the people have to depend upon the old crop. These months are always difficult, and this year they have to be faced from a bad start and with a prospect of increasing pressure on Indian resources to meet operational needs.

Longer term measures are being taken. The Committee under the Chancellor of the Exchequer is considering anti-inflation moves in general (which would incidentally help to bring food on to the market), and the Government of India have already met with some success in their endeavour to check the rise in the general price level. Last year's Grow More Food campaign has been intensified, and where 8 million additional acres were brought under food crops last season 12 million will be brought under food crops this year, mostly under millets. Other long-term measures are expected to emerge from the recommendations of the Government of India's Long-Term Food Policy Committee which has just reported.[5] I have not yet received an official summary of its report, but I understand that it not only recommends the importation of one million tons of grain annually till normal conditions are re-established, but strongly urges the necessity to import at once 500,000 tons to afford, so to say, the spring-board from which to launch its long-term policy with prospect of success.

This last recommendation is of immediate importance, for we cannot look to any of the Committee's long-term recommendations nor to any of the other measures referred to above to help us through the dangers which must be faced this present autumn. In Bengal famine conditions already exist and elsewhere conditions bordering on famine. In a telegram dated the 19th September the acting Governor of Bengal reports:—

[*There follows the decipher of No. 125, para. 1 from 'I have wandered . . .' to '. . . looks very flourishing' and para. 3 from 'Even if all the promised supplies . . .' to '. . . subsists on charity'.*]

[4] No. 71. [5] See No. 123.

The conditions so described are becoming a serious menace to supply operations and to the movement of troops. The sight of famine conditions cannot but cause distress to the European troops and anxiety to the Indian troops as to the condition of their families in other parts of India (where, as noted above, conditions afford ample cause for anxiety), and they provide all the more a very dangerous handle to Japanese propaganda of which full use is being made.

In all these circumstances I must most earnestly urge the War Cabinet to reconsider in the light of the Chiefs of Staff memorandum the request of the Government of India for the import of up to half a million tons of food grains to India between this month and March of next year. The War Cabinet will not forget the terms in which the Viceroy urged reconsideration of this case in his telegram of the 13th August last,[6] which is appended.

L. S. A.

[6] No. 78.

133

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 130th Conclusions, Minute 2

L/PO/6/111: f 165

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1 on 22 September 1943 at 6.45 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison

Also present during discussion of item 2 were: Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps

Meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 49th Conclusions, Minute 1)[1]

In April the War Cabinet had invited the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs to ascertain whether it would be practicable to hold during the summer a Meeting of Prime Ministers or other Ministers representing the Governments of the British Commonwealth and Empire. It had not been found practicable to arrange for such a Meeting to be held at that time. On 8th September the S./S. for Dominion Affairs had, at the Prime Minister's request, sent a further invitation to Dominion Governments with a view to a meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers in London in November.

The War Cabinet now had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (W.P. (43) 404)[2] to which were annexed the replies received to this further invitation. It was recommended in the Memorandum that every effort should now be made to ensure that such a meeting took

place at the earliest opportunity. A stage had now been reached at which it was essential that there should be a full discussion between the Heads of the constituent States of the British Commonwealth on post-war policy and on the machinery whereby, in collaborating with the major Allies, the Commonwealth would be enabled to express a united view. For this purpose we should press for a meeting not later than January 1944.

THE PRIME MINISTER endorsed the above proposals, which would not, however, interfere with the earlier arrival in this country of Field-Marshal Smuts.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA suggested that the Government of India should also be invited to send representatives. Most of the matters which would be discussed were of vital interest to India, and many of them were matters which fell within the recognised jurisdiction of the Government of India. He drew attention to the fact that in 1921 a conference specially designated as one of Prime Ministers, was also attended by Indian representatives and that since the last war the position of India, both at all Empire meetings and at Geneva, had been assimilated to that of the Dominions.[3]

On this point the view of the War Cabinet was that, as this was to be a Meeting of Prime Ministers, India could not participate on equal terms. At the same time, it was recognised that India ought to be represented in the discussion of some of the problems which were likely to come under review. The difficulties of this situation could best be overcome if Representatives of India at the
X" War Cabinet were already in this country at the time when the Conference was held. It could no doubt be arranged that these Representatives of India should be invited by the Prime Ministers to take part at some of their discussions.

The War Cabinet—

(1) Invited the S/S for Dominion Affairs to urge the Dominion Prime Ministers to do their utmost to arrange to attend a Meeting of Prime Ministers in London in January 1944.

(2) Agreed that the question of Indian representation at this Meeting could best be dealt with on the lines suggested at "X" above; and invited the

1 and 2 Not printed.

3 On 23 September, Mr Turnbull wrote to Sir E. Bridges asking, on behalf of Mr Amery, for the inclusion of this para. in the Cabinet Conclusions. On 25 September, Sir E. Bridges replied that Mr Attlee was agreeable to the suggestion provided the following para. was amended to read:

'THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DOMINION AFFAIRS said that the position had, of course, been altered by the Statute of Westminster. Further, the meeting now proposed was a meeting of Prime Ministers, and there was no one who was in a position to represent India at such a meeting.

'The War Cabinet accepted the view that India could not participate on equal terms in a meeting of Prime Ministers. At the same time . . .'

On 29 September, Mr Turnbull informed Sir E. Bridges that Mr Amery agreed to Mr Attlee's additions. The Cabinet Conclusions were amended accordingly. L/PO/6/111: ff 166, 158, 157.

S/S for India to arrange for the Indian Representatives at the War Cabinet to pay a further visit to this country, arriving in advance of the date proposed for the Meeting of Prime Ministers.

134

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: ff 161–2

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL INDIA OFFICE, *23 September 1943, 7.40 pm*
Received: 24 September

1025. War Cabinet have decided[1] to urge the Dominion Prime Ministers to do their utmost to arrange to attend a meeting of Prime Ministers in London in January 1944. I drew attention to the fact that in 1921[2] a conference specially designated as one of Prime Ministers was also attended by Indian representatives and that since the last war the position of India both at Empire meetings and at Geneva had been assimilated to that of the Dominions. Also, in any case the matters which would be discussed which include questions of post-war policy were of vital interest to India and many of them matters falling within the recognised jurisdiction of the Government of India. The view of the War Cabinet was that the question of Indian representation could best be dealt with on the lines that Indian representatives at the War Cabinet should already be in this country at the time when the conference is held and could then take part with the Prime Ministers in some of the discussions, but that the meeting should primarily be one of Prime Ministers only.

2. I presume it would be possible to get two Indian Representatives to come here in December for a month or two if they were told that important discussions were likely to take place after Christmas at some of which India would require to be represented.

[1] No. 133. [2] MSS. EUR. F. 125/25 has '1931'.

135

War Cabinet

Committee on India. Paper I (43) 3

L/PO/6/108a: ff 71–4

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *23 September 1943*

I circulate a revised version of the Memorandum by the Viceroy-Designate, previously circulated as I (43) 2.[1] The passages which Lord Wavell has amended in the light of the previous discussion in the Committee[2] are shown in heavy type.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 135

MEMORANDUM BY THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE

There follows the text of Enclosure to No. 116, except that the last sub-para. of para. 2 of the Memorandum reads:

'References to "Dominion Status" have long been a stumbling block to Indian politicians **(who believe, quite wrongly, that the term implies some limitation of sovereignty) and should be avoided in all public announcements about India's future.'**

para. 5 of the Memorandum reads:

'It may be suggested that, without dealing directly with the main issue, some advance might be made by such steps as a further Indianisation of the Executive Council, or by setting up some expert body to make a preliminary path-finding investigation of the Constitutional problem.

There is much in favour of these proposals; but I am sure that if we regard them as a real means of progress to our ultimate aim, we mistake the character of the problem with which we are faced. It is essential that we face that problem squarely and define our immediate aim—whatever it may be—with a full understanding of its implications.'

para. 12 of the Memorandum reads from the penultimate sentence:

'. . . It would be necessary to include the principal Congress leaders—Gandhi and Nehru. **They would, if they accepted the preliminary conditions of the**

[1] No. 116. [2] No. 120.

discussion, have to be released unconditionally, i.e., remain at liberty whether the discussion succeeded or failed. The release of other political prisoners would be a matter for the Coalition Government itself, if it were formed.'

para. 17 of the Memorandum reads:

'To summarise, I recommend:—

(i) **that His Majesty's Government adopt, as the aim of our policy in India, the establishment in the near future of a Coalition Government of party leaders at the Centre.**
(ii) that the scheme for the establishment of such a Government be as outlined in my draft invitation (Annexure A);
(iii) **that the time when I should ask for definite Cabinet approval to my making an appeal on these lines be left to my judgment,** and that in the meantime I be authorised to make a statement on the lines of Annexure B.'

para. 2 of Annexure A reads:

'The first step towards a solution is, I firmly believe, a constructive partnership between the leaders of the great Indian political parties—particularly the Congress and the Muslim League—for the remainder of the war, on the footing that the principles of the new constitution and the method of making it remain open to discussion. **It may indeed prove that in the friendly atmosphere of a working partnership that discussion might make useful progress.**

How can such a partnership be formed? Surely by the formation of a Coalition Government at the Centre—a Government of political leadership. There are three immediate tasks before any Government in India to-day:—

(i) the prosecution of the war against Japan to a successful ending;
(ii) the regulation of our internal economy so that the strain and suffering imposed by total war are reduced to a minimum;
(iii) the planning of post-war reconstruction not only in industry but in the wider economic and social fields.

These tasks are of the highest importance, and should inspire all of us —British and Indians alike—to greater efforts than we have ever made before. If, while we are performing them, we find that we can make constructive proposals about the principles of the new constitution and the method of making it, I have no doubt that our views would carry great weight both with the Indian people and with His Majesty's Government. But I cannot make the solution of the constitutional problem an essential task of the Coalition Government without raising issues so complicated as to make the formation of such a Government difficult if not impossible. My hope is that

a Government of party leaders, co-operating primarily in administrative tasks, might in fact make an agreed contribution to the solution of the constitutional problem.

The Coalition Government I have in mind would consist of recognised party leaders, who would be selected by me in accordance with an agreement to be reached at the discussion proposed below.'

para. 3 of Annexure A reads from sub para. (8):

'(8) The constitutional settlement must be based on agreement between the main elements in India's national life. There can be no question of any main area in British India in which Muslims are predominant being coerced into acceding to a constitution which they are not prepared to accept, any more than there can be any question of coercing Indian States into accession.

(9) There must meanwhile be a communal truce. Attempts by the communities to manœuvre for position can only prejudice our war effort and our hopes of a constitutional solution.

If we are all prepared to accept and observe these conditions in letter and spirit, I believe we can do more for India in two years than in ten of Round Table Conferences. If we are not, then the present arrangements must continue until times are more favourable. The first and absolutely essential requirement of India is a Government that can and will govern. The present Government is capable of governing, and if we cannot find a Coalition Government, must continue.'

and para. 4 of Annexure A reads:

'I now put to you two plain questions:—

(*a*) Are you prepared to co-operate in the formation of a Coalition Government for the purposes and on the conditions outlined above? and

(*b*) If so, would you be willing to take part in a discussion at Viceroy's House to prepare a definite plan **with a view to coming to agreement on the formation of such a Government?**

With regard to (*a*), I ask you to remember that this is not a mere repetition of the "Cripps Offer." That offer dealt primarily with the method of settling the new Constitution. **My plan leaves this question of method entirely open, subject always to the main condition laid down in paragraph 3 (8) of this letter.**

You are being asked to co-operate in the formation of a Coalition Government for British India, in the first instance for the performance of administrative tasks which require political leadership. There is no question of any constitutional commitment by any party at this stage.

As regards (*b*), I enclose a list of the persons to whom this letter is being sent. Those of them now in detention would, **after notifying me of their willingness to take part in the discussion on the conditions laid down above,** be released unconditionally to take part in the discussion. The discussion itself must be secret—with no announcements and no communication with the outside world until final conclusions are reached. While it continues, I hope that those taking part in it will accept the hospitality of my house. **The discussion would have to cover the willingness or otherwise of the party leaders to form a Coalition Government on the conditions laid down above; the distribution of portfolios; and the recommendation to me of the names of possible members.** I do not myself intend to take part in it, but shall be available to help if I am wanted, and will provide a competent secretarial staff. I am satisfied that we cannot proceed at all unless the representatives both of the Congress and of the Muslim League are prepared to take part, with the sincere intention of carrying out the plan if they possibly can. I am also satisfied that a meeting larger than that contemplated by me would have little chance of success.'

136

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Jinnah

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *23 September 1943*

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you very much for your letter of the 15th September[1] in reply to my letter of September the 7th.[2] As you say I did not think it necessary to put any special marking on my letter to you, the correspondence between us being personal in character and no suggestion having been made by you that you were anxious or might be anxious to publish any reply from me. I appreciate what you say in your letter, but I should prefer that the correspondence should remain as personal between us and should not be given to the Press.

2. As I am on this subject I might add that I understand that His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir has now appointed a commission to consider and report upon the whole question of "Reforms" in the State.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[1] No. 115. [2] No. 99.

137

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *23 September 1943*

I made a statement on the food question in the House this morning[1] and had to face a real barrage of supplementary questions. It is characteristic that those in the House who are most clamorous for Indian self-government were also this morning even more clamorous for the immediate overriding of the Provinces by the Centre. I trust I struck a just mean between pointing out the extent of Provincial responsibility in the matter and making it clear that we are not going to hesitate about intervening from the Centre if necessary. Anyhow, I see no reason to fear any serious Parliamentary trouble if in connection with this food crisis we may find ourselves compelled either to introduce Section 93, or, preferably, the more moderate extension of the Governor's powers suggested by Rutherford. Meanwhile, Rutherford seems to be handling the situation with courage and vigour and Suhrawardy also would, judging at least by Reuters, seem to be playing up.

2. Meanwhile, the Chiefs of Staff have considered Auchinleck's telegram[2] and weighed in with a really strong memorandum[3] to the Cabinet which I have followed up with another[4] of my own. These two papers, together with the impression created by the attitude of the House this morning, ought to have some effect on the War Cabinet when it meets to consider the matter tomorrow. Even Winston, if still unsympathetic, may at any rate realise the necessity for action on a more substantial scale than he has hitherto contemplated; but I don't see any prospect of the million and a half tons that your Long-term Committee have recommended.[5]

3. In the meantime, in connection with the general anti-inflation campaign, I have had some talk with Chester Beatty of the Diamond Syndicate and of the big South African copper mining interests and have suggested to him that India might at this moment provide a very good market in which not only to unload diamonds, but also to unload mining and other attractive shares. He took quite keenly to the suggestion and I am going to talk it over further with him at dinner tonight. I am not sure that almost the best import that I could send to India at this moment might not be a small covey of really plausible stock-brokers looking out for speculative clients with money to burn!

4. Poor Kingsley Wood's sudden death[6] has deprived us of a reasonably sympathetic Chairman of the India Finance Committee which deals with this

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 392, cols. 394–400. [2] No. 102. [3] No. 119.
[4] No. 132. [5] See No. 123. [6] On 21 September.

problem. If Winston should decide to move Grigg from the War Office to the Exchequer that would really be helpful, because after all he does understand the Indian situation and has been very helpful on the committee so far. I should not be nearly so happy if his choice fell on Bracken, who knows nothing about the position, is by nature cocksure, and, like Cherwell, more concerned to please Winston than anything else. The Office has prepared some admirable and very detailed papers[7] bearing on all the problems and on what India has done and might perhaps be encouraged to do. The kind of suggestions that may still emerge from the committee may be an increase of the Excess Profits Tax and of the Income-tax in the middle income ranges; more generally, also, something in the nature of a reduction in Indian war production. Whether anything of that sort can really be done at the same time as India is asked to help with the South-East Asia campaign seems questionable. Anyhow, it is going to be a real uphill fight to prevent the whole situation from running away with us before the next twelve months are out. But I dare say, as with the food situation, when things look critical enough both the War Cabinet and the Americans may begin to revise their notions of what they can do in order to help and may weigh in with much larger quantities of bullion to help things out.

5. In that connection Kisch tells me that while the Americans were prepared to let us have 20 million ounces of silver straightaway for currency purposes and were not prepared to fix any monthly figure, they would undoubtedly on any good case being made, find as much more silver as currency purposes required. I am not sure how far the need for actual coin may not be as much responsible for village hoarding as anything else, and if so I have no doubt you can make another case for coming back to the charge before many months are out.

6. I have just cabled[8] to you about the War Cabinet decision[9] to make a real effort to get together a Prime Ministers' conference for January. For some reason which I cannot quite make out, Attlee is so afraid of Prime Ministers running out at the last moment, or thinking this to be a formal Imperial Conference, that he vigorously opposed the idea of India being included. I pointed out not only that since the last War India has attended on the same footing as the Dominions all inter-Imperial gatherings as well as Geneva, &c., but that in 1921 when such a meeting of Prime Ministers was convened the Indian representatives also attended and that it was called a "Conference of Prime Ministers and Representatives of the Dominions, the United Kingdom and India". Besides, I urged that practically all the questions to be discussed affecting both the war and the post-war situation are of vital interest to India, while many of them, e.g. economic questions, civil aviation, &c., are within the recognised sphere of full Indian responsibility. In the end the Cabinet decided to dodge the situation by having the Indian representatives here already, preferably some

weeks beforehand, and inviting them to certain joint meetings with the Prime Ministers, but not altering the conference as one of Prime Ministers only. I suggested that it might be the other way round, i.e. that the conference should be on the 1921 basis, but that there might be subjects on which the Prime Ministers wished to meet without the Indian representatives, just as Cabinet here has not a few meetings at which neither the Indian Representatives nor Bruce, the Australian, have attended. I don't know whether you think it worth while raising objection on principle at this stage, or whether the matter might not be left until a little nearer the actual date. My own impression is that the Dominion Prime Ministers would raise no objection to what I would consider a preferable arrangement and I may take an opportunity of discussing the matter with Smuts, who is expected here quite shortly.

[Para. 7, on staff for Lord Wavell's extra-statutory duties, omitted.]

8. Wavell's speech to the Pilgrims[10] has had a very good reception indeed here, though, as you feared,[11] it has raised some exaggerated hopes in some quarters. The *Glasgow Herald* has for some reason or other been critical and impatient about India for some time past. Wavell's other short speeches and his personal appearance[s] have gone down very well everywhere. I don't suppose he will make another speech of any consequence, however, until he gets his farewell send-off at a Government Dinner on the 6th. Winston will be in the Chair and it will be interesting to know what kind of a speech he will make.

[Para. 9, on Sir Aurel Stein's projected visit to Afghanistan; para. 10, on a rumoured cause of Sir J. Herbert's illness; and para. 11, on the reception given to a contingent of the Fourth Indian Division, omitted.]

[7] L/F/7/687. [8] No. 134. [9] No. 133. [10] See No. 126, note 1. [11] See No. 126.

138

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE SIMLA, *24 September 1943, 5.45 pm*
PERSONAL *Received: 24 September, 5.45 pm*

No. 372–S.C. Following telegram No. 166, dated the 23rd September, from Governor of Bengal is repeated:—

Begins. Thank you for message of September 22nd.[1] We have now sufficient stocks, mainly wheat and wheat products, piled up in Calcutta for one month's

[1] Informing him of the passage through India of a Chinese Goodwill Mission to Britain. MSS. EUR. F. 125/43.

reserve for city, rice is only about 8,000 tons. Stevens is finding it difficult to force Bajra, of which we have about 12,000 tons, into consumption. Bookings from the Punjab direct to districts of wheat products now being made, and total quantities being received just at present are in advance of programme. If this can be kept up there is some chance of us winning through without present deaths [*sic*]. Present rate in Calcutta fifty a day mostly among the immigrants from outside. No reliable information as to deaths in districts. Nobody can give me any accurate figures but I estimate we must import at least two lakhs of tons of food stuffs in the next three months and realise the great difficulty in procuring this in India. Stevens presses for more rice as he anticipates trouble from industry as wheat has to be more and more substituted for rice. Is there any truth in the rumour that Central Government have arranged imports from outside India? Struggle with holders of what rice there is over price control continues but in Calcutta small parcels are being offered at control rate. In 24-Parganas saw myself consignments of *aus* paddy being sold at control rates straight from boats but that is no guarantee of retailers' behaviour.

2. Relief Commissioner appointed to ginger up District Officers and help them with advice and orders. Figures given by Revenue Department of persons being fed daily are mofussil eight lakhs forty thousand, greater Calcutta one lakh eighteen thousand. Have not yet got Ministry to (group omitted). Have not yet forcibly removed destitute immigrants from Calcutta to outside camps possibly due to pre-occupation with Assembly which was a riot yesterday. Today there are cut motions on judicial budget[2] over Chief Justice's remarks[3] about Fazlul Huq.

3. Other matters are also dealt with dilatorily, for example, Stevens' staff. I think Ministry would hate to lose their jobs. Have I your permission to hint that there are bones beneath the glove? Section 126–A could be used over rationing if necessary as Food Department is supplying our needs. Reuters asked unofficially for advice whether they could cable home today's editorial in *Statesman*.[4] I refused to act as censor.

[*Para. 4, on the impossibility of District Officers taking part in savings drive, omitted.*] *Ends.*

[2] 'cut motions on judicial budget' deciphered as '(? agitated) motions on judicial (corrupt group)'.

[3] In a judgment delivered late in August 1943, the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court described some letters sent by Mr Fazlul Huq to a District Magistrate trying a looting case as 'interfering with the course of justice'. By the action, the Chief Justice added, Mr Huq had broken his oath of office and 'the clear violation of the oath of office branded a man as unfit for public office'. L/P&J/8/652.

[4] On the food situation and headed 'Reflections on Disaster'.

139

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 131st Conclusions, Minute 1

L/E/8/3322: ff 188–9

Those present at this meeting held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W. 1, on 24 September 1943 at 3 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison

Also present during discussion of item 1 were: Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Lord Leathers, Lord Woolton, Mr Harcourt Johnstone, Mr Ralph Assheton, Air Chief Marshal Sir Charles Portal, General Sir Alan Brooke, Vice-Admiral Sir Neville Syfret

SHIPPING

Indian grain requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions, Minute 1)[1]

At their Meeting on 4th August the War Cabinet had considered the request of the Government of India for the shipment of 500,000 tons of wheat between September 1943 and February 1944 to relieve the acute shortage of food in India; and had authorised the Minister of War Transport to arrange for 100,000 tons of barley to be sent to India from Iraq and for 50,000 tons of wheat to be sent from Australia to Colombo to await instructions there.

The War Cabinet now considered Memoranda by the Chiefs of Staff and the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (43) 407 and 411)[2] asking that the position should be reconsidered in view of the continued deterioration of the food situation in India.

The Chiefs of Staff endorsed the view of the Commander-in-Chief, India, that it was of the highest importance, from the strategical point of view, that the Government of India should receive all possible aid in dealing with the food situation; and pointed out that, if the position continued to deteriorate, the efficient prosecution of the war against Japan by forces based on India would be gravely jeopardised.

The S/S for India in his Memorandum said that famine conditions were developing in the industrial areas in India, particularly in Bengal. He outlined the long-term measures which were being taken to deal with the unsatisfactory economic position in India; but he explained that these could not take effect in time to mitigate the difficulties which seemed certain to arise before the end of the year. These could only be met by the early despatch of additional supplies

[1] No. 71. [2] Nos. 119 and 132.

of food grains to India, and he urged the War Cabinet to review their earlier decision and to give a firm assurance that 500,000 tons of cereals would be shipped to India before March 1944.

THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE supported the request made by the S/S for India. He said that more than a year ago, when Commander-in-Chief in India, he had found it necessary to make the strongest representations on the Viceroy's Executive Council regarding the need for increasing the supplies of food available in India. The shortages had been such that it had been necessary to reduce the rations of the Indian Army and the Army's food reserves had at one time fallen to a very low level. The position appeared to be even worse at the present time; and there was a grave risk that military operations would be jeopardised if sufficient food were not made available, not only for the Army but also for the industrial populations on whose efforts our military operations depended.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that, although the shipping situation generally had been eased by the recent diminution in sinkings, this did not make it easier to relieve India's immediate needs; for it would not be possible to work additional ships into positions from which they could lift grain for delivery in India before the next Indian harvest. The 50,000 tons of wheat which the War Cabinet had previously authorised him to move to Colombo was already being loaded; and shipment of the 100,000 tons of barley from Iraq could begin at the rate of 20/30,000 tons a month, as soon as the Ministry of Food had finally determined the price. (THE MINISTER OF FOOD indicated that this would be settled within the course of the next few days). The only means by which he could make additional supplies available was to ship a further 30,000 tons of barley from the stocks which were being built up in the Middle East with a view to supplying the irregular forces operating against the enemy in the Balkans, and to divert another 30,000 tons of wheat and flour which was not [now] being sent to the Middle East to augment those stocks. If these additional measures were authorised, he would be able to ship a total of 210,000 tons of food grains to India by the end of the year. The result would be, however, to reduce substantially the stocks which we had been trying to accumulate in the Middle East for the supply of the Balkans; and he saw little prospect of being able to build up those stocks again before the end of the year.

In discussion attention was drawn to the disadvantages of diminishing the stocks which were being accumulated for possible use in the Balkans, since these were already far smaller than we could wish. At the same time it was recognised that India's needs were urgent and there seemed to be no other source from which they could be supplied. It was felt, however, that not more than a maximum of 50,000 tons should be withdrawn from these stocks.

THE S/S FOR INDIA pressed that some assurance should be given to the Government of India regarding shipments in the first quarter of 1944.

The view of the War Cabinet was, however, that at this stage we should concentrate on shipments up to the end of 1943, and should review the position again in the light of the Indian harvests. Meanwhile, any further supplies that might become available should be shipped only as far as the Middle East. From there they could either be sent forward to India, or stored for use in the Balkans, according to the relative needs of the two areas at the end of the year.

The War Cabinet's Conclusions were as follows:—

(1) The Minister of War Transport should aim at shipping a total of 200,000 tons of food grains to India by the end of 1943. This would be made up of the 150,000 tons authorised by the War Cabinet at their meeting on 4th August and a further 50,000 tons to be withdrawn from the stocks already accumulated in the Middle East, or *en route* for the Middle East, for the supply of the Balkans.

(2) The position should be reviewed again at the end of the year in the light of the Indian harvests.

(3) Meanwhile the Minister of War Transport should take any opportunity that offered of shipping further supplies of food grains to the Middle East so that they would be available in 1944, either for onward shipment to India or to augment the supplies which were being accumulated for the Balkans.

(4) The S/S for India should inform the Government of India that it would be out of the question for us to arrange for the import of anything like 1,000,000 tons of food grains annually into India. Every effort must therefore be made to remedy the long-term situation by internal measures in India.

140

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: ff 257–60

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *25 September 1943, 5 pm*
Received: 26 September

22028. Your telegram of the 20th September, 2089–S.[1] I shall be glad to learn[2] results of examination of suggestion for amendment of Section 57. I have every sympathy with Rutherford's desire to have his hand strengthened in a very difficult situation and am anxious to help. But subject always to further consideration when you telegraph again I confess that I am not at present greatly attracted to the suggestion of an amendment of S. 57 to widen its scope to extent suggested by Rutherford.

[1] No. 124. [2] 'learn' deciphered as 'communicate'.

2. Section 57 was of course introduced to meet the different situation created by a terrorist menace and the underlying presumption was that the Governor would have at his disposal sources of information not available, and which he could not make available, to Ministers. That does not hold at any rate in regard to the supply and distribution of food, when all the factors are or should be known to the Ministry. I should not be influenced by Parliamentary difficulties in securing the amendment if it were clearly essential and it might be that the difficulties would not be formidable in view of the acute interest and anxiety displayed by the House in the food situation in Bengal. But it seems to me that the amendment would amount to a very clear admission by Parliament that they are convinced of the incompetence of the Bengal Ministry in a field peculiarly pertaining to Ministers and indeed of the dubious worth of Provincial autonomy in time of crisis. The consequences would I fear seriously prejudice the development of Provincial self-government.

3. Further the practical merits of the suggestion seem to me very doubtful. The mere enactment of an amendment empowering Governor to act in his discretion in cases of grave emergency with specific reference to Bengal food situation (in effect to take civil supplies wholly out of Ministerial sphere) and of course very much more so the use of such new powers by the Governor, would in my surmise be likely to precipitate resignation of the Minister and probably the whole Ministry with the consequence that the Governor would be forced into Section 93 by a course that would be held to be more provocative than that discussed in my telegram of the 9th September, 20541.[3] I recognise that if by amendment proposed Governor were enabled to take civil supplies into his own hand in his discretion he could control Department more directly and effectively than by a repeated use of his individual judgment under Section 52(1)(*a*). (I assume that in light of Section 50(3) Rutherford would not hesitate to judge that special responsibility under Section 52(1)(*a*) was attracted).[4] But the outcome I feel would be that he would find himself without a Ministry or an alternative Ministry to carry on the general administration.

4. Having regard to the indications that the present troubles in Bengal cannot be cured save by co-ordination with all-India action initiated by the Central Government I incline to the view that the proper course is action under Section 102 or 126A or both. If Section 126A were brought to bear the need for compliance by the Bengal Administration would then attract the Governor's special responsibility under Section 52(1) (*g*). I note from paragraph 3 of Rutherford's 166 repeated in your 372–S.C.[5] of 24th September that his mind too seems to be moving in this direction. This course also might provoke resignation by the Ministry and lead to a Section 93 situation but would at any rate flow clearly from provisions of Act and be less open to criticism as deliberate measure to torpedo Ministry.

5. If, however, view prevails that nothing will meet the case but amendment to give Governor powers comparable to those of Section 57, I feel that to amend Section of such particular character to make its provisions applicable to famine emergency would be incongruous and that insertion of entirely new *ad hoc* section would be preferable.

[3] No. 104. [4] 'attracted' deciphered as 'intention'. [5] No. 138.

141

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 180–1

IMPORTANT
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *25 September, 7.30 pm*
Received: 26 September

No. 22051. Your personal telegram 1742–S[1] of 13th August. Food imports. Matter came before Cabinet again yesterday[2] in light of your recent telegrams[3] and position in Bengal. I urged that you should be given undertaking that 500,000 tons would be imported by March 1944.

2. Cabinet fully appreciate seriousness of Indian position and possible repercussions on military affairs. Shipping position is such however that most they can do at present is to increase the 150,000 tons referred to in my 17601[4] of 7th August to 200,000 tons. This will be done by diverting 50,000 tons partly barley from stocks built up in or *en route* for Middle East.

3. Position will be reviewed at end of year in light of the Indian harvest position but Cabinet wished me to warn you with reference to report of Gregory Committee[5] that import of anything like million tons annually is out of the question. Every effort must therefore be made to remedy long term situation by internal measures in India.

[1] No. 78. [2] No. 139. [3] See Nos. 121, 125 and 130. [4] No. 74.
[5] See No. 123.

142

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 183–5

IMPORTANT
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *25 September, 7.45 pm*
Received: 26 September

1031. My personal telegram 22051.[1] Food Imports. For your own information I should like you to know that in Cabinet discussion I had strong support in

[1] No. 141.

paper[2] by Chiefs of Staff based on Auchinleck's telegram[3] in which military aspects were emphasised. Leathers explained that although reduced sinkings had improved position it was not possible to work ships into positions from which wheat could be carried to India before next Indian harvest. Most he could do this year was to ship additional amounts from M[iddle] E[ast] where a stock is being built up to feed population of S[outhern] Europe, more particularly the formidable guerilla forces in the Balkans which are engaging an ever-increasing proportion of the enemy's forces. As these reserves are essential to operational success, Cabinet would not agree to transfer of more than 50,000 tons as stock is already slender for its purpose.

2. Leathers stated that shipment of 50,000 tons of wheat previously authorised has already been arranged and Iraq barley can be moved at rate of 20/30,000 tons a month when price is settled, which Woolton said would be in the next few days. This figure presumably included shipments to other destinations as well as India. Probable that additional 50,000 tons will include some more Iraq barley.

3. I did not disclose Food Dept. telegram of 22nd September 8001[4] since I feel sure that if it had been known that it was thought possible on account of the price to dispense with 100,000 tons already promised, any case for increases would have been brushed aside. I trust that telegram is not final view of G. of I.

4. If you think it wise to make public announcement on basis of present decision please consult me as to terms.

[2] No. 119. [3] No. 102.

[4] Stating that Iraq barley was likely to cost at least ten rupees a maund more than the wholesale price of Indian barley and its sale in India would necessitate a government subsidy of some 27,500,000 rupees. Since the amount of barley promised would provide only a very limited solution to Indian food difficulties, the value of the transaction would be out-weighed by unfortunate publicity implications. L/E/8/3316: f 212.

143

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE SIMLA, *26 September 1943, 4.15 pm*
Received: 26 September, 4.45 pm

No. 391–S.C. Rutherford's telegram No. 166 of 23rd September which I repeated to you under my No. 372–S.C.[1] I have replied to his paragraph 3 as follows:—

Begins. Your paragraph 3. I find it a little difficult to advise with confidence. My own estimate would coincide with yours, viz. that Ministry do not want

to lose their jobs. On the other hand we have got to be careful not to get into a Section 93 situation as result of their disappearing before we are ready for it or before we are satisfied that there is no other way out. I appreciate the great restraint and caution which you have shown in dealing with this difficult situation so far, and I have every confidence in your judgment. I think I must leave it to you to decide whether now that you have begun to get to know these people and that you are getting the situation in hand it is wise to bring more pressure to bear or to take rather a stiffer line on specific items in the light of what I have said above about the necessity for avoiding a crisis that could reasonably be imputed to us. I should have thought that the very strong criticism that is now appearing in Home press would by itself have made Ministers more sensitive and more apprehensive of criticism if they fall down under the present emergency, and that that would strengthen your hand. I would therefore if I were you use my own judgment and discretion, and you may be certain of my support. If there is any specific proposition at any time of this nature on which you think my advice will be of help please telegraph at once. *Ends.*

Rutherford has shown much balance and judgment in handling this business so far, and has been very anxious to avoid rushing things. I have confidence in his judgment, but I think I must leave it to him to play the hand with the knowledge that I shall be prepared to support him. There are of course certain risks in giving him a relatively free hand but I think we must be prepared to take those. I think myself that he has made an excellent showing so far.

[1] No. 138.

144

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

SIMLA, *26 September 1943, 4.35 pm*
Received: 26 September, 3 pm

No. 392–S.C. I was delighted to see excellent statement on the food position which you were able to give in the House yesterday[1] and am much relieved to find strong sense of uneasiness in Parliament at the food crisis. I shall be telegraphing to you separately as regards our programme, &c. I would only at this stage again most earnestly beg you, given what is I trust the more favourable atmosphere, to press our request for imports. All the advice that I get coincides in regarding this as the most effective solution. You should know for your own information that my Council are also getting very restive on the subject. They

[1] See No. 137, note 1; the date should be 23 September.

are aware of the terms in which the Chief[2] and I[3] have supported demands for imports and of the negative replies[4] of His Majesty's Government, and they think it unreasonable that they should be held up to criticism as they are here on the ground that they are doing nothing in this direction and should not be free to say that His Majesty's Government have refused to help. Mudaliar in fact at the last meeting suggested that a formal protest should be addressed by Council to the Cabinet. I was able to head that off. But the point may come up again, and fact that that suggestion should have been made and by Mudaliar is significant.

[2] See No. 102. [3] See Nos. 39 and 78. [4] See Nos. 74 and 141.

145

Mr Gandhi to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/154, file 103

PERSONAL DETENTION CAMP, *27 September 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,

On the eve of your departure from India I would like to send you a word.

Of all the high functionaries I have had the honour of knowing, none has been the cause of such deep sorrow to me as you have been. It has cut me to the quick to have to think of you as having countenanced untruth, and that regarding one whom, at one time, you considered as your friend. I hope and pray that God will some day put it into your heart to realise that you, a representative of a great nation, had been led into a grievous error.

With good wishes,
I still remain
your friend,
M. K. GANDHI

146

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *27 September 1943*

Your letter of the 15th September[1] has just been received. Thank you very much for it. I dictate a very hasty reply as the bag goes out this afternoon.

2. We have had your telegram[2] about lotteries and I am glad to think that we are in agreement about this slightly controversial business. I agree with you

that one must give weight to existing circumstances. I am passing on the point you make in paragraph 2 of your letter to Raisman. I am also telling him of your talk with Chester Beatty.

3. Bengal shows signs of reacting to Rutherford's vigorous personality and administrative experience. But it is clear that he is not having too easy a time with Ministers and I feel a good deal of sympathy for some way out, if one could be found short of Section 93. But thinking in closer detail over Section 57 I am bound to say that the difficulties seem to me pretty substantial, and I shall be telegraphing to let you know the advice that I have had from the Reforms Office with which I am disposed to agree. I ought, I think, to mention that a suggestion of this type was made by Jack Herbert himself earlier in the spring and in different circumstances. I did not much like it then and there was not anything like the case for special action that exists at the moment. I send you copy of the letter[3] I then sent him which definitely poured cold water on the proposition. But I shall be interested to hear of your own reaction to it. Once Rutherford has established himself in Bengal I dare say that he may be able to take the Ministers with him by showing his teeth a little more, and that we may be able to get over our difficulties without a breakdown. I cannot believe that the Bengal Ministers really want to go out of office and their political enemies in the Province will certainly make the most of it so far as they are concerned if they do.

* * *

5. Thank you so much for your help about food. The position is very difficult indeed. We are under immense pressure here, and His Majesty's Government are bound to come into the limelight before long over the matter of imports. Indeed I find it difficult, as I write, to know what answer I can advise you to give in the House on this Parliamentary question[4] about the Mayor of Calcutta's representation, and we cannot much longer clamp censorship down on the extremely acid criticism that is about, or take the responsibility ourselves. It will have to come back on His Majesty's Government. At the same time I am far from satisfied that the Punjab are doing anything like as much as they ought to. I had a long talk with Glancy this morning, but relatively little came out of it, and after it I have sent him a very stiff letter[5] of which I send you a copy. Nothing less than a very sharp jolt will produce any effect on either Glancy or his Ministers; but I propose to be very direct with his

[1] No. 117.

[2] 21797 of 22 September welcoming the G. of I's proposal to issue a lottery loan. L/F/7/826.

[3] Of 6 May 1943. MSS. EUR. F. 125/43.

[4] Mr J. Mack had a question down for answer on 11 October 1943 asking whether a recent telegram from the Mayor and Corporation of Calcutta to Mr Churchill on the grave famine situation had contained any specific requests and demands and what action it was proposed should be taken in regard to it. L/E/8/3298.

[5] No. 147.

Chief Minister when I see him tomorrow. The fact is that no Province in this country is moved in the slightest degree by the sufferings of any other Province, and equally no community has the slightest consideration for the sufferings of any other community. The damaging effect of this present food crisis on the public mind as an indication of the manner in which the responsibility transferred to Provinces under Provincial Autonomy may be employed, I would judge as likely to be substantial.

* * *

PS.—Looking through my letter to Glancy again, I have, as you will see, taken the name of the Cabinet fairly freely. But there is little else that is likely to make any deep impression here, and I have not the least doubt that what I have said as to the feeling of the Cabinet is in fact justified.

147

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) (Extract)

MSS. EUR. F. 125/92

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *27 September 1943*

My dear Glancy,

I have been thinking over our discussion with Raisman this morning. I must say that I am left with a feeling of very grave disquiet. Before I proceed you should know that I am consulting Rutherford as to whether he would see any objection to some statement by the Central Government about the absorption by reductions of the price of *atta* of any profits that have been made by Bengal over wheat bought at earlier stages from the Punjab and I will of course let you know the result as soon as I hear from him. I am also of course making certain preliminary enquiries of the Food Department.

2. But what disturbs me is that I am under the very strongest pressure from the Cabinet, in this matter, and I am gravely concerned, less about the future of your Ministry, though that of course is much in my mind, than about the good name of the Punjab. We are rapidly reaching a point at which the whole force of public criticism here and at home is going to concentrate on the Punjab, and at which we may have it stated in terms, however reluctant I should be to associate myself with any such suggestion, that the Punjab Ministers, and the Punjab cultivator under the lead of the Punjab Ministers, are engaged in blackmailing the starving peasants of Bengal so as to make inordinate profits at a time when they have already made very substantial profits indeed. I should find it impossible to stand against that criticism. But great harm is already, I am

certain, being done with the Cabinet as well as with the general public to the reputation of the Province and much of the excellent name which the Punjab so rightly won for itself earlier in the war by its contribution to the war is disappearing consequent on the very widely growing and firmly established impression that the Punjab in the most difficult situation that confronts us are disposed to apply only the test of provincial profit. I would ask you to bear that in mind and to give it full weight. I shall put it myself in terms to your Prime Minister when I see him tomorrow and warn him of the very great concern which I feel.

3. I wish, too, that it was possible to get across to your Ministers the fundamental importance of keeping these prices down from the inflationary point of view. It is all very well the Punjab making very substantial profits at this moment. But if these profits meet the fate of the German Mark the Province would be none the better off for having made them. The Cabinet are most seriously concerned, as Raisman told you, about the inflationary position in India, so concerned indeed that they have set up a special sub-committee to examine and handle it.[1] I realise that these economic issues are often difficult of apprehension by Ministers who have not had much previous training in them. But I know that you realise their force fully, and I must look to you to get it across to your Ministers.

[1] See No. 71.

148

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE *28 September 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 407–S.C. Your private and personal telegram of 25th September, No. 1031.[1] I am most grateful for your help though I fear we shall have to continue to press our case. I am going into the matter again with my Advisers and will telegraph when I have done so. Meanwhile I have discussed position in relation to Iraq barley with Raisman who has agreed to find the money; though he expresses himself as apprehensive of criticism both of us and of His Majesty's Government if only substantial relief effected is barley at £40 a ton.

2. I saw Glancy yesterday and urged on him most strongly the necessity for better co-operation on the part of the Punjab. I followed this up with a pretty stiff letter[2] copy of which went to you by the bag of 27th. I am, this morning, seeing Khizar Hayat, and will let you know the result.

[1] No. 142. [2] No. 147.

149

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMPORTANT

SIMLA, *29 September 1943, 8.15 pm*
Received: 30 September, 1.15 am

No. 420–S.C. I again saw Glancy and his Premier (separately) on 28th September. I put it very straight to Khizar Hyat that individuals in the Punjab Ministry, by the type of propaganda they had indulged in through the districts in favour of holding for a rise, carried a very grave responsibility for the present reluctance of the cultivator to sell at a reasonable price, and that it was vital to the good name of the Punjab which had suffered greatly already owing to its attitude over food to remove as early as possible suggestions now frequently made that the Punjab was holding the starving population of Bengal to ransom in the hope that prices might rise. I added that whatever mistakes there might have been in the past—and I did not deny that mistakes there had been—our business now was to concentrate on the future, and that I must look to him and to his colleagues to co-operate actively. It appears that no instructions have yet been issued by the Punjab Government to Revenue Officers to concentrate on getting wheat out, and nothing has been done by them in that way save exhortation in general terms by the Premier to the National War Front. I told the Premier and also Glancy that I must have early and categorical orders to Revenue Officers on this matter and that the terms of those orders would be in the minds of most people the test of the degree of sincerity of the Punjab co-operation. I quite recognised that these measures might be unpopular and that the cultivator was probably concerned to make as much as he could out of the situation: but any unpopularity involved must be faced. The Premier made the point that the Punjab cultivator had had a bad time in the past and it was very hard that he should suffer now. I said I could not accept that view as an adequate excuse and that in any event he should bear in mind that if as the result of severe inflationary position developing[1] consequent on great rise in food prices as the result of the Punjab peasant's refusal to part, whatever savings or profits he might make would go up in smoke.

2. I have of course informed[2] Glancy of the course of my conversation with his Premier and have urged him most strongly to get his team to pull along and give us some results.

[1] Presumably this should read 'if severe inflationary position developed'.
[2] MSS. EUR. F. 125/92.

150

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

SIMLA, *29 September 1943, 7.55 pm*
Received: 30 September, 12.30 am

No. 421–S.C. My telegram of 20th September, No. 2089–S.[1] Section 57. I have now had the advice of my Reforms Commissioner[2] who points out that it is not quite clear whether Rutherford has in view solution of food problem or that Governor in his discretion should be given power to take over any branch of the provincial administration if, to quote Section 57, "he thinks that the circumstances of the case require him to do so".

2. He points out that primary responsibility for provincial administration rests on the Ministry except in matters in which the Governor acts in his discretion.[3] Not only in view of the present emergency created by the war but even of the situation created by the food problem, Governor's special responsibility is attracted in regard to all aspects of the provincial administration. He has undoubted right to overrule his Ministry and if they do not acquiesce in the decision of the Governor it is open to them to resign.

3. Reforms Commissioner doubts whether Rutherford's position would be better were he given power in his discretion to take over any branch of the provincial administration at will. Section 57 deals with revolutionary activities which are more or less a self-contained subject and could be dealt with by taking over law and order. Food problem however cannot be dealt with on those lines since it runs through the whole scheme of provincial administration, and finance, public health, transport, distribution, production, are all affected. If such powers were taken, chances are that Ministry would resign. If they did not risk of grave friction could not be overlooked. If they do resign we might as well have gone to Section 93 straightaway. On the other hand if the range of power assumed by the Governor is limited it will not solve the problem.

4. Menon's final conclusion is that if Ministry fails to discharge its primary responsibility in respect of provincial administration and thereby creates an emergency, straightforward course is for the Governor to assume administration of the province under Section 93. He thinks that there would be more public support for such a course in those circumstances than for an amendment of the Act which might be criticised as superfluous (in view of the Governor's powers in his individual judgment[4] and of Section 93) and as reactionary since it would be a permanent provision not contemplated by the authors of the Act,

[1] No. 124. [2] Mr V. P. Menon. [3 and 4] See No. 49, note 4.

diminishing the scope of provincial autonomy and constituting a sword of Damocles[5] over the heads of the Ministers.

5. I think that there is much force in Menon's points. On the other hand you fully realise how reluctant I am to consider our having to go into Section 93 if we can help it, though there may be no remedy for it in the long run. It would help me greatly in reaching my own conclusion if I could have your reactions when I will telegraph further.

6. Above was drafted before receipt of your telegram of 25th September No. 22028[6] for which I am most grateful. It looks to me as though the objections were on the whole pretty substantial. I doubt in the light of your views and of Menon's if real progress can be looked for this way, and we may have to face up to use of Section 93 if things cannot be managed satisfactorily under the existing machinery. I fully appreciate as you know force of consideration referred to in the concluding sentence of your paragraph 2. But recourse to Section 93 will equally point the same moral. While therefore we may have to abandon this idea, I confess that I should myself do so with reluctance. But I propose to discuss further with Rutherford who is coming here on the evening of the 3rd for a day, and will telegraph again after I have done so. Meanwhile if you have any further comment in the light of my present telegram it would be most welcome.

[5] A phrase meaning impending evil or danger. Damocles of Syracuse was invited by its Ruler to try the felicity he so much envied. Accepting, he was sat down to a sumptuous banquet, but overhead was a sword suspended by a hair. Damocles was afraid to stir, and the banquet was a tantalizing torment to him.

[6] No. 140.

151

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE SIMLA, *29–30 September 1943, midnight*
Received: 30 September, 2 am

No. 430–S.C. Following telegram No. 167 of 28th September from Governor of Bengal is repeated:—

Begins. Ministry has pushed through Budget most speedily and I congratulated Chief Minister on this. Fazlul Huq and his supporters have been playing a thoroughly dirty game trying to organise demonstrations of hungry and blackavise [*sic*] Ministry.

2. As regards clearing destitutes from Calcutta streets Chief Minister wants more time to get private relief bodies and also opposition to co-operate. He is supported by Martin, Relief Commissioner, who is presiding over a conference

today. I do not like this delay but will wait a little longer. I got Deputy Leader of the European group to take matter up. I am not anxious to go into Section 93 and accept full responsibility for managing at present an almost unmanageable situation especially as Ministry whatever its past mistakes is honestly trying to cope with it but still think my hands should be strengthened by an amendment of Section 57 especially with Bengal a base for military operations. Section 126–A can be used for matters like rationing arrangements as centre is supplying food but I gather that Kirby having been taken round some of purlieus of Calcutta is feeling depressed.

3. I visited cyclone stricken Midnapore District incognito yesterday and saw all the horrors reported in papers including corpses being torn to pieces by dogs and vultures. There is however great variation in appearance of people and I think it is true to say that majority of starving are the parasitic beggars and old people hitherto maintained by private charity. Ominous signs however are large sales of metal, household vessels, ornaments and excessive sales of land. In one village Registration Office was besieged and (group corrupt) writers were plying their trade briskly. Large crowds also found trying to get agricultural loans with probably no intention of repaying. About 4 lakhs in receipt of minimum relief and I am pressing for more food to be sent. Transport difficulties are great as district is almost roadless and denial policy has upset boat traffic. Staff in charge of relief very poor quality and I have ordered extra officers to be posted for control. Rice found on sale in limited quantities but at Rs. 32 a maund against control rate from 25th September of Rs. 22. Reserve of foodstuffs in Calcutta still only one month's.

4. If convenient to you I think it would perhaps be better if I came to Simla about 4th or 5th instead of waiting till you return to Delhi when you will be overwhelmed with all incidentals to departure.[1]

I hope to send you a written appreciation of situation by the end of the month. *Ends.*

[1] This para. is not in the India Office decipher.

152

War Cabinet

Committee on India. I (43) 2nd Meeting

L/PO/6/108a: ff 60–7

Those present at this meeting held at 11 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 29 September 1943 at 10 am were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Sir John Anderson, Viscount Simon, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir Edward Bridges (Secretary)

Also present were: Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Sir D. Monteath, Mr E. M. Jenkins

The Committee had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State (I. (43) 3)[1] containing a revised version of the Memorandum by the Viceroy Designate previously circulated as I. (44) 2.[2] This revised Memorandum contained amendments made in the light of the discussion at the previous Meeting.

LORD WAVELL and THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA drew attention to the main alterations which had been made in the Memorandum.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION, who was not present at the earlier meeting, said that he agreed generally with the Memorandum.

The first point discussed was what the position of the Viceroy would be if a Coalition Government of Party Leaders at the Centre was formed.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR referred to paragraph 2 of Annexure "A" and said that the words "a Coalition Government at the Centre—a Government of political Leadership", gave the impression that responsible Cabinet Government was contemplated. It was true that paragraph 3 (4) in Annexure "A" made it clear that the Governor-General must retain his existing powers to overrule the Executive Council in the last resort. But he thought that Annexure "A" as a whole would lead Indians to think that the extent to which the Viceroy now controlled his executive Council and acted as his own Prime Minister would be greatly reduced.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER drew attention to the danger of using phrases in this connection which were drawn from the practice of democratic Constitutional Government in this country. He did not agree with the statement in paragraph 17 (i) that it was the aim of our policy in India to establish in the near future a Coalition Government of Party Leaders at the Centre. In his view, our primary objects at the present time were, first, to bring India successfully through the war, and, in the second place, to bring about a Constitutional settlement which would command general assent in India.

THE LORD PRESIDENT said that the Viceroy Designate's plan seemed to cater only for the Muslims and the Hindus, other parties or communities receiving little mention. He thought that the plan should be more broadly based.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR said that he thought the first point to settle was whether any communication should be made to the Indian political leaders on the lines of Annexure "A". In his view, any approach to Gandhi or Jinnah at the present time, when the primary need was to have India as a secure base for operations, would be disastrous. He was satisfied that there was nothing

to be gained by attempting to negotiate with Congress during Gandhi's lifetime. The answer given to this invitation would certainly not be "Yes" or "No" but a demand for clarification, and the result would be that Gandhi would once more be elevated into a position of authority comparable to that of the Viceroy.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that he appreciated the views of the Secretary of State for War, but saw difficulty in detaining the Congress leaders indefinitely. A new approach would do no radical harm and might do good. He drew attention to certain drafting amendments which might be made to meet the points made by the Lord Chancellor and the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

It was felt, however, that at this stage the Committee should first consider whether it was the intention that the Viceroy should continue to be the effective Head of the Government.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER and THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR pointed out that while it is technically true that the Viceroy does not now overrule his Executive Council he does in practice—

(a) withhold some important matters from it, and
(*b*) exercise great influence over the members, whose appointments are entirely in his hands.

LORD WAVELL said that his intention was that, as Viceroy, he should continue in exactly the same position as at present, but with a change of the personnel on his Council. While he wanted to include on the Council representatives of Indian political parties, he also hoped to retain some of the members of the present Council.

At the present time the Viceroy succeeded in persuading the Council to go with him, and as far as his own experience went it was not the practice to withhold important matters from the Council. He proposed that precisely the same position should continue, although he realised that with a Council comprising political leaders it would be harder to persuade them to adopt any particular course, and that the threat of resignation would be much more serious than it could be now. He felt, however, that the course set out in the Memorandum was the only one which offered any hope of progress towards self-government in India. If His Majesty's Government did not wish any attempt to be made to effect progress towards self-government during the war, then he thought that he should be authorised to state this definitely when he went out to India. This, of course, need not exclude relatively minor changes, such as, for example, a further degree of Indianisation of the Council.

Lord Wavell said that he recognised that, from a short-term point of view,

[1] No. 135. [2] No. 116.

there were obvious advantages in not attempting to make further progress towards self-government in India during the war. But, looking at the position as it would be, say, two years hence, he thought that such a decision would be fraught with grave disadvantages. The political leaders would then be determined to get out of the British Commonwealth, and a settlement would be most difficult.

THE LORD PRESIDENT said he quite understood the Viceroy Designate's intention, but thought Annexure "A" was not sufficiently explicit.

LORD WAVELL said that Annexure "A" was not a final draft. It was only an outline showing the content of the letter he had in mind; the form of the final document might be quite different. If we were honest we must fulfil our pledges; and we must avoid getting ourselves into an impossible position.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION said that Lord Wavell's plan would help to prevent feeling in India becoming embittered. This was important since our main aim must be to keep India within the Commonwealth.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that in the last two years there had been at least two occasions on which the Viceroy and the Cabinet had both deferred to the views of the Viceroy's Council. He referred to—

(*a*) the decision to release the balance of prisoners still in detention under the earlier Civil Disobedience Movement;[3] and

(*b*) the question of the financial relations between this country and India.[4] On this matter the Viceroy had decided against even communicating a document to the Executive Council, and the Cabinet had agreed that this issue should be postponed.

Reference was made to the position if Gandhi accepted the Viceroy Designate's offer, but Jinnah refused.

It was generally recognised that this would mean that the Congress leaders would have to be released. It was, however, argued that we were already in the position that we should have to release them if they declared their willingness to co-operate in the war effort.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR raised the question whether, if representatives of Congress were members of the Council, it would not be necessary to communicate to them administrative plans connected with operational matters.

LORD WAVELL said that he had never been pressed to communicate future operational plans to the Council, and he did not anticipate any difficulty on this.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that, in his view, a new Viceroy going out to India should not be debarred from reopening the Constitutional question if he thought this was the right course. His misgivings were

directed to the nature of the statement which the Viceroy proposed to make. As he had already said, he did not think that our aims were as stated in paragraph 17 (i) on page 6. He thought that any approach should take the line of saying that, if the leaders of the Indian political parties gave evidence of friendliness and goodwill, we should be prepared to give them a fuller share in the responsible government of the country. He feared, however, that an approach on the lines suggested by Lord Wavell would be interpreted as meaning that, while we had failed to resolve the Constitutional deadlock, we were now inviting the leaders of the Indian political parties to come and take over responsibility for government at the Centre. This would be construed as an act of surrender.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR added that there was a risk that an offer in the terms proposed by Lord Wavell might be regarded as identical with some of the suggestions put forward by Indians at the time of Sir Stafford Cripps' Mission; e.g., the suggestion that "a truly National Government" should be formed which must be "a Cabinet Government with full power" (see page 13 of Cmd. 3650).[5]

THE LORD PRESIDENT said that he thought that the Committee should now attempt to formulate their general conclusions on the policy proposed. The Secretary of State for War was clearly opposed to any approach on the lines indicated being made at the present time. The Lord President thought, however, that other Members of the Committee took the view that the new Viceroy should be in a position, if he thought fit, to make a fresh approach to the Indian Political Leaders.

As regards methods, he thought that the Minister of Aircraft Production, the Secretary of State for India and Lord Halifax, were in general agreement with an approach on the lines proposed, although the Secretary of State for India was not very hopeful of a successful issue.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION said that, while he favoured an approach on the lines proposed, he thought that some modifications should be made in order to avoid any risk of misunderstanding.

THE LORD PRESIDENT then invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer to state his position.

3 Mr Amery was evidently referring to the correspondence which he and Mr Churchill had had with Lord Linlithgow, and the deliberations of the War Cabinet, during November and December 1941. The War Cabinet had raised objections, not so much to the policy of releasing the prisoners as, firstly, to the giving of "advice" by the Government of India to Provincial Governments in a matter primarily within the responsibility of the latter; and, later, to the issue of a public announcement of the Government of India's decision. L/P&J/8/671.

4 See Vol. III, No. 24, Minute 2; also Nos. 56 and 139 in that Vol.

5 The reference should be to Cmd. 6350; see Vol. I, No. 590.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that he thought the Viceroy should be authorised to give a reassurance of the desire of H.M. Government to do all in their power to advance India to the stage of full responsible self-government. The Viceroy should emphasise that the Cripps offer was still open, and should make it clear that, if the Indian Political Leaders showed any real desire to collaborate and support us in the war effort, we for our part were ready to consider any alternative plan for achieving our object of full responsible self-government. Provided we had an assurance of the good will and co-operation of the Indian leaders in facing the constitutional problem, we were willing to consider how far it might be possible, without any legal constitutional changes, which could not be made in time of war, to bring about some provisional interim arrangement whereby the recognised Leaders of the Indian Political Parties would be entrusted with a greater degree of responsibility. He should emphasise, however, that this last proposal was secondary to our primary aim.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR expressed himself as in general agreement with the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He drew attention to certain phrases which he thought were open to objection, e.g. in the second sentence of paragraph 15 there is a sentence that we were pledged to give India her freedom. This statement, he thought, was inexact. There were also several points in Annexure "A" which he would like to see stated differently. He recognised, however, that as long as Mr Gandhi and the other Congress Leaders were in durance H.M. Government were open to a certain amount of criticism, and from this point of view welcomed the attempt to break the deadlock.

LORD WAVELL said that he thought any public announcement on the lines proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would wreck all chances of a successful issue of the approach proposed.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that a public statement was not an essential part of his scheme and quite agreed that the matter might be better dealt with by getting private assurances from the Leaders of the Indian Political Parties.

THE LORD PRESIDENT said that he thought it was important that the approach made by the Viceroy should be on broad lines and should not go into so much detail as Annexure "A". Timing and method of approach were, however, matters which should be left to the Viceroy.

LORD WAVELL then read to the Committee the first draft which he had sketched out as the basis for consultation with his advisers and which had later been elaborated into Annexure "A".

THE COMMITTEE expressed the view that this document, which was

considerably shorter and in more general terms, was much closer to the line of approach which they had in mind.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION read out a Draft Directive to the Viceroy Designate which he suggested might be submitted for Cabinet approval. This draft met with general approval. (See Annex to these Minutes.)

Other points dealt with in discussion at this stage were as follows:—

(1) THE LORD PRESIDENT pointed out that no reference had been made in the documents before the Committee to our responsibility for minority communities;

(2) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that the responsibility to Parliament had also not been mentioned.

(3) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR said that he remained opposed to any approach being made to the Indian Political Leaders during Gandhi's lifetime, in the absence of any approach from these Leaders.

Some discussion then ensued on the wording of Annexure "B". Two points were made:—

(1) That instead of the word "independent" it would be better to use some phrase based on the wording of the Draft Declaration approved by the War Cabinet at the time of the Cripps' Mission, e.g. full self-government of India under a constitution framed by Indian hands.

(2) Objection was also seen to the phrase "remaining within the British Commonwealth of Nations but, if the Indian people so desire it, outside it." In place of this phrase, use should be made of the phrase which had been incorporated in the Declaration of March 1942, viz. "that H.M. Government should not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth."

THE COMMITTEE'S conclusions were as follows:—

(1) The Secretary of State for India was invited to draft a Memorandum which should set out the main points in the proposal laid before the Committee by the Viceroy Designate; and brought out in the Committee's discussion; and should conclude by submitting for the approval of the War Cabinet:—

(*a*) A Draft Directive on the lines proposed by the Minister of Aircraft Production;

(*b*) A revise of Annexure "B", as the statement which the Viceroy should be authorised to make shortly after landing in India.

(2) This Memorandum should be circulated for consideration by the

Committee at a further Meeting to be held at 4.30 p.m. on Monday, 4th October.

(3) The Memorandum as approved by the Committee would be submitted, under a covering note by the Lord President, to the War Cabinet. It was hoped that the matter could be discussed by the War Cabinet on, say, Thursday the 7th October.

Annex to No. 152[6]

(See page 57 of Minutes)

DRAFT DIRECTIVE TO THE VICEROY DESIGNATE

H.M.G.'s aim is to work towards the creation of an atmosphere in India which will assist in the solution of the constitutional problems so as to secure that India remains within the Commonwealth of Nations, and in the meantime to rally the Indian people to the maximum war effort.

In pursuing this path H.M.G. consider that the new Viceroy should be able to approach the political leaders in India as and when he considers it desirable.

The method of approach should be by private letter to a selected list of leaders which should make clear

That the basis of any negotiations for any interim alterations must be the goodwill of the Indian Political leaders to

(*a*) carry on with all vigour the war against Japan

(*b*) work together genuinely and wholeheartedly towards the solution of the constitutional problems.

On this basis the Viceroy would have power to work out a scheme by which in the interim the Viceroy's executive can be made more representative of Indian political opinion.

[6] This Annex is marked 'B' in manuscript on the file copy. [7] i.e. p. 337 in this Vol.

153

Mr Jinnah to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/125

MOUNT PLEASANT ROAD, MALABAR HILL, BOMBAY,
30 September 1943

Your Excellency,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 26th of September 1943[1] and I thank you for it. I must say that apart from the question of my releasing the correspondence, your letter under reply is somewhat disappointing.

With regard to your giving me information that His Highness the Maharaja of Kashmir has now appointed a Commission to consider and report upon the whole question of "Reforms" in the State [?, this] was already known to me and one of the grievances is with regard to the personnel of the Commission amongst others relating to this Commission, but far more serious situation is created by the present administration and Kashmir Authorities in the day-to-day Administration and the way in which the Muslims are treated there. The accounts that I have received lead me to believe that the present situation is intolerable unless some responsible independent and impartial head of the Administration takes charge of the affairs of the Kashmir Administration. Ill-treatment, oppression and tyranny to the Muslims is rampant and this matter requires your immediate attention. I gathered from your letter of the 7th September 1943[2] that you were fully alive to the whole situation and proceeded to state "I can assure you furthermore that the whole situation will continue to receive my constant attention and I hope that the doubts to which you have given expression about conditions in the State will presently be *totally*[3] resolved".

In conclusion, I should like to draw your attention to the fact and you must have observed that my letter of the 23rd of August[4] and subsequent letters are addressed to you in your official capacity as Viceroy and Governor-General of India, however, as you prefer that the correspondence should not be released I have refrained from doing so at any rate for the present.

Yours sincerely,

M. A. JINNAH

[1] No. 136; the date should be 23 September.
[2] No. 99; the date should be 6 September.
[3] Italics here are Mr Jinnah's.
[4] No. 88.

154

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 253

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *1 October 1943, 3.45 pm*
Received: 2 October

22484. Your telegram of the 29th September 421–S.C.[1] I am much interested to see Menon's comments which I confess do not increase my liking for suggested extension of Section 57. I do not however wish to comment further pending the receipt of your views after discussion with Rutherford.

[1] No. 150.

155

War Cabinet

Committee on India. Paper I (43) 4

L/PO/6/108a: ff 54–8

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *1 October 1943*

I circulate for consideration a draft memorandum to the Cabinet prepared in the light of the India Committee's two discussions of the Viceroy-Designate's memorandum (I (43) 1st and 2nd Meetings).[1]

I attach as annexure A a draft of the short "immediate" statement to be made by the Viceroy soon after arrival in India, altered on the lines suggested by the Committee at its second meeting. It has also been revised by Lord Wavell. This will also form Annexure A to my memorandum to the Cabinet.

As Annexure C I attach the draft directive suggested by the Minister for Aircraft Production at the last meeting of the Committee. As the Committee only adopted this draft as a sketch representing their intentions, but subject to further consideration and amendment, I have attached as annexure B a revised draft of it, for consideration by the Committee and, if approved by it, for attachment to my Memorandum to the Cabinet.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 155

War Cabinet

Indian Policy

DRAFT

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *October 1943*

The Viceroy-Designate desires guidance on the policy he is to follow in dealing with the political deadlock in India. He summarised his views in a Memorandum[2] which, supplemented by his oral exposition of various points, has been considered at two meetings by the India Committee of the Cabinet. Briefly he holds—

(i) That while the ultimate aim of our policy in India remains that indicated in the "Cripps offer," our immediate intentions are not clear.

(ii) That the choice lies between—
  (*a*) Continued inaction in the political field; and
  (*b*) The revival in some form of the "Cripps offer".

(iii) That inaction implies the retention of the present "official" Executive Council with or without changes in its composition—a safe enough course with many obvious short-term advantages, but with the serious disadvantage that at the end of the war we should still be at a loss how to advance India towards self-government, and that the situation will have been increasingly embittered.

(iv) That the revival of the "Cripps offer" implies a real attempt to carry out the "immediate" portion of that offer and to bring the leaders of the Indian political parties into the Executive Council—a course involving many obvious short-term dangers, but almost certainly the only course which will make any post-war solution of the problem possible.

(v) That the second of these two possible courses is to be preferred to the first.

If that general conclusion commended itself to the War Cabinet the Viceroy-Designate's specific suggestion was that he should invite a comparatively small number of the leaders of the different parties to a private discussion among themselves with a view to the establishment of a coalition Government including political leaders to replace the existing members of the Executive Council. He would come back to the War Cabinet for definite approval of his issuing such an invitation only if after studying the situation and taking advice he saw that there was a reasonable prospect of success and that action could be taken without detriment to the war effort. In particular, he felt that he ought to consult the present Executive Council and, if possible, carry it with him. In the meantime he asked for authority to make, shortly after his arrival, a cautiously worded statement (Annexure A) indicating that political progress during the war was not absolutely ruled out.

It would be an essential preliminary condition of the proposed discussion, and of the release of those Congress leaders, such as Gandhi and Nehru, whom he would invite to take part in it, that they should definitely promise their wholehearted support of the war effort, disavow any intention of renewing Civil Disobedience, as well as accept the main principles of the "Cripps" proposals, viz., that the ultimate constitutional settlement must be based on agreement between the main elements in India's national life, and that the predominantly Moslem areas and the Princes must remain free not to accede to a majority constitution of which they disapprove, and that the interim coalition Government to be formed must remain under the existing constitution

[1] Nos. 120 and 152. [2] No. 135.

and subject to the retention of the Governor-General's power of overruling the Executive and, on occasion, acting independently of it. If the conditions were accepted by the Congress leaders to whom the invitation was issued they would be released unconditionally and, subject to future good behaviour, remain at liberty even if the discussion proved unfruitful.

It would be made clear to those invited that the task of an interim coalition Government, if agreed upon, would be to carry on the war to a successful ending, to deal with the immediate economic problems and to consider the needs of post-war social and economic reconstruction. The constitutional problem would not be one of the tasks specifically assigned to them, though it might be hoped that in the atmosphere of friendly co-operation in the administration they might, in fact, make some agreed contribution towards its solution.

Lord Wavell fully realises that such a reconstituted executive might be both less efficient and more difficult to manage than the present Executive. As against that he would set the greater measure of public support for the war effort and for dealing with the difficulties of the economic situation, and, still more important, the avoidance of an increasing bitterness which might fatally prejudice the prospects of India after the war wishing to remain within the Empire. In any case he feels that the main guarantee for India's security during the war lies in the British and American forces on the spot and on the fact that the new Executive, if it really proved obstructive, could be dismissed.

I share Lord Wavell's view that this attempt should be made if, and as soon as, the conditions appear favourable. Our present position is open to the criticism that while we have repeatedly stated that the "Cripps" offer is still in principle open we in fact make agreement upon it impossible by detaining the leaders of the most important Indian party and allowing them no opportunity for reconsideration of their attitude towards the internal Indian deadlock. We are no doubt entitled to say that they must first abandon the attitude which justified their detention, but that still leaves us exposed to the charge that we are not, in fact, giving them any effective opportunity to do so, and that we are not really sincere in our professions of a desire for Indian agreement.

As for the prospects of success, I do not overrate them. Gandhi's influence may still be able to wreck any prospect of agreement. At the same time, the military situation has entirely changed in our favour since the time when his conviction of the certainty of our defeat, shared by many of the Congress leaders, enabled him to secure the rejection of the "Cripps" proposals. It may be even more strikingly favourable in the course of the next few months. In any case a renewed attempt to break the deadlock, if made with obvious sincerity, should, even if it failed, convince public opinion, here and in America, and in some measure even in India, that we have no alternative but to carry on as we are for the war. In either event the atmosphere for the future constitutional discussions would be improved.

I therefore recommend that the Viceroy-Designate should be given a general authority to study the possibility of attempting to break the present deadlock in some such way as he has suggested, and that his desire for guidance should be met by a War Cabinet directive on the lines of the draft which I attach as Annexure B.

L. S. A.

Annexure A to No. 155

DRAFT STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE SOON AFTER HIS ARRIVAL IN INDIA

The Indian people will expect from a new Viceroy some statement about the political deadlock. For the time being, I must ask them to be patient. I shall for some weeks inevitably be much occupied with the arrangements for the establishment of the South East Asia Command, and other questions of immediate importance such as the food situation. But I can assure you that the British Government and the British people sincerely desire that as soon as possible after the war India shall become fully self-governing, under an agreed Indian-made constitution and a treaty negotiated between Great Britain and India which, while it is hoped that it will preserve India's position as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations in allegiance to the Crown, will not impose any restriction on India's power to decide in the future her relation to the other Member States of the Commonwealth. Attempts to make substantial progress towards this end during the war have so far failed, but I intend, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, to make further attempts should there appear to be good prospects of success.

Annexure B to No. 155

REVISED DRAFT DIRECTIVE TO THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE

H.M.G.'s aim is to work towards the creation of an atmosphere in India which will assist the promotion of such a solution of the constitutional problems as will secure that India remains within the British Commonwealth of Nations, and in the meantime will rally the Indian people to the maximum war effort.

In pursuit of this aim H.M.G. consider that the new Viceroy should be authorised to examine the possibilities of making an approach to the political leaders in India if and when he considers that the prospects of success justify it, and should make recommendations to the Cabinet as to the line of approach to be adopted.

Subject to further consideration and advice in India the most suitable method of approach might be by private discussion of possible means of resolving the present deadlock.

The invitation should make it clear that the basis of any discussions which might lead up to interim changes in the composition of the present Executive

Council, aimed at making it more representative of Indian political opinion, must be a sincere assurance on the part of the Indian political leaders of their intention to

(*a*) carry on with all vigour the war against Japan;
(*b*) work together genuinely and wholeheartedly with the intention of thus contributing towards the solution of the constitutional problems,

and an acceptance on their part of the position that for the period of hostilities, and until an agreed Indian-made constitution is evolved and brought into effect, the Governor-General's Executive Council must remain subject to the existing constitution, i.e. to the ultimate control of H.M.G. and Parliament exercised through the Governor-General's present statutory powers.

Annexure C to No. 155

DRAFT DIRECTIVE TO THE VICEROY-DESIGNATE
(BY THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION)

[*There follows the text of the Annex to No. 152.*]

156

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *1 October 1943*

I am not at all satisfied with the attitude of the Punjab over this food business. I suspect that they have been too concerned to do good business themselves, and if Ministers had not taken the line that certain of them have, we could get a great deal more grain out of that Province. Glancy, whose qualities you know well, is of course first class at fighting a defensive action, and naturally feels bound to give his Ministers all the support that he possibly can. I felt it essential to shake him up pretty briskly on this, and I am glad to say that my letter of 27th September,[1] of which I sent you a copy by the last bag, had its effect, for he came round immediately and told me that he trusted that I did not think that his Ministers were profiteering. I told him that I was unfortunately not able to take that view. . . .[2] I have telegraphed[3] to you the gist of my conversation with the Punjab Premier. He is a pleasant and well-meaning person, not particularly intelligent, and he could produce no fresh argument in support of the provincial attitude. I hope that I may have been able to get it across to him also that we take a very serious view of the position and do look to the Punjab to lend its assistance effectively.

2. When I had finished dealing with the food position Khizar Hayat asked permission to raise one or two other questions. We had a short discussion about standard cloth on which he had complaints which I am investigating. He then proceeded that he thought it most important to recognise in any post-war settlement here the work and the position of the Punjab soldier. He had no suggestion to make as to how this should be done, but thought that possibly a special franchise might help. At the end of the last war, he said, the Punjab soldier had got nothing and His Majesty's Government had devoted their attention to making concessions to people who had done nothing like as much as the Punjab soldier and had nothing like as good a claim. Khizar Hayat had however no positive suggestion to make on this matter. I dare say we shall hear more of this: but the difficulties are obviously very great of giving a specially privileged position, on the basis of the constitution we are working to, to military elements throughout the country.

3. He then went on to say that he trusted that now that I was going home I would have regard to the interests of the Punjab. I made it clear to him that once I had laid down my office I had nothing more to do with these matters and that it would be improper for me to hold a brief for anyone out here or to depart in any way from the strict conventions that existed in these matters. Khizar, with a naivety which was encouraging, then said to me that it would be such a help to the Punjab if I could only find out from His Majesty's Government what their future Indian policy was likely to be and make the Punjab acquainted with it so that the Punjab could spontaneously work in the right direction. I am sure that you and I would be only too glad, and Wavell also, if we could foretell now what the future policy was going to be! But that the Premier of an important Province should conceive it possible first for anyone out of office to have early and confidential information of the intentions of His Majesty's Government, and secondly to put a particular Provincial Ministry wise about them is, I fear, rather a depressing reflection on the political capacity and on the imagination of even the best meaning of these people.

4. I enclose an extract from a minute of a talk[4] between Laithwaite and Elliot of the Ministry of Supply Mission which speaks for itself. I think the

[1] No. 147. [2] Personal reference, not relating to a Punjab Minister, omitted. [3] No. 149.

[4] Mr Elliot, of the Eastern Group Supply Council, had said that there had recently been at least two or three cases in the Govt. of India Supply Dept. where orders for goods, usually obtained from South Africa, had been held up or where remote and unlikely sources were being investigated. He therefore found himself in some difficulty. While he could not avoid representing to the Ministry of Supply—if only in self-protection—that these tendencies were developing, he recognised that high political issues were probably involved and did not wish to start a battle with wide repercussions. He therefore felt it best to report to the Ministry of Supply but to add that there were political complications which would probably render it undesirable, at any rate at that stage, to take the matter further. Sir G. Laithwaite agreed with the suggested course of action. MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

right course for Elliot to take is that which he himself suggested to Laithwaite: but it would be important that you should know the background. This will no longer be my business now, but we shall obviously have to keep a fairly close eye on events to prevent political considerations interfering with vital supplies or with war effort. Mudaliar seems to feel exceptionally strongly on the South African issue, and his general balance and judgment are clearly lacking in dealing with it. One fully sympathises as you know with the keen resentment which is naturally felt at the attitude of the South African Government. But it would be a pity to allow passion to drive out prudence, and I should be very surprised if when the examination of possible retaliatory action which is going on here has been completed, any convincing case, taking the wider interests of India and the war into consideration, will prove to have been established for going as far and as fast as some of my colleagues would like.

5. In that connection I have just had from Khare a request to be allowed to discuss in Council a proposal for a representation to you that the Act should be amended so as to introduce a discriminatory franchise against the South Africans. Both politically and otherwise that seems to me most unwise, and I cannot imagine any such proposal doing any good to India in the House or having much chance of getting through. The moment it was ventilated—that is if it ever got on the paper—we should have all the dirty linen on both sides washed in public. And I suspect that from what one knows of the social level of a great many of these unhappy people in South Africa, the South African advocates might be able to put up a case which would be most damaging to India and to her good name in the House of Commons. But it would clearly be very unwise of me to refuse to allow this matter to be ventilated in Council, and I am agreeing therefore that Dr. Khare's memorandum should be circulated, and must do what I can, if it comes up for discussion in my time, to try to keep opinion on the right lines.

3 October 1943

6. I have just received your letter of 23rd September[5] for which very many thanks. I was greatly interested in the comment in the first two paragraphs on the food situation. I too have been much struck by the sharpness and apparently fairly widely scattered sources of this criticism in the Press at home that the handling of the food situation, whether by Bengal or by the Punjab, is a very serious reflection on Indian capacity for self-government under the Act of 1935. I think it is just as well in fairness to ourselves that it should be brought out as it has been that we are after all both in Bengal and in the Punjab dealing with Ministries wholly Indian and wholly non-official in composition, and that that was true of the Huq Ministry which, in my judgment, carries a heavy responsibility for the present state of things, as it is of Nazimuddin's Ministry in Bengal today.

7. I am so glad that the Chiefs of Staff have been so helpful, and I hope greatly that your hands have been strengthened in fighting this very difficult battle by the great interest that the food situation in this country has aroused both at home and in the United States.

8. In paragraph 6 of your letter you mention the proposed Prime Ministers' conference in January. I have just had your telegram[6] and am interested to see that Wavell, too, thinks that Firoz is probably the best man from here. I would have been disposed to agree myself, had it any longer been my responsibility, that we must get a Muslim home at some stage or other, and therefore that if there were to be a Hindu representative from British India, it might be a case of working in someone like Bhopal to succeed the Jam Saheb. I suspect at the same time that the operation of substitution might be one of some little delicacy since while the Jam Saheb is in no hurry to go back to London so far as I know, he equally fully realises the prestige which attaches to being one of India's representatives at the Cabinet. But I think it is better that the negotiations with my Council as to Indian representation and all the rest of it should wait for Wavell. I could of course have started it with the Jam Saheb, and I have no doubt I could have fixed up the British Indian side. But there is always the possibility that, given the very short time now available to me, some hitch might have occurred or something gone wrong, and in that event I should have been leaving Wavell a more difficult situation than he would otherwise have had to handle.

9. I am profoundly relieved on all grounds to think that the idea of the Foreign Office representative out here should have been ruled out. The probabilities of early friction and misunderstanding would be very great indeed.

[Para. 10, on the filling of emergency vacancies in the Provinces, omitted.]

4 October 1943

11. I send you under separate cover copy[7] of the scheme which is now under consideration for bringing out some more Punjab wheat, and to which I have referred above. To my orthodox mind—orthodox at any rate so far as banking principles are concerned—it seemed a pretty stiff one; but Raisman seems quite satisfied as to its propriety from that point of view. If this is so and the banks are prepared to play, that is their business and not mine. I certainly think that if we could contrive to get anything like the quantity referred to, the moral effect may be very great; though one cannot of course judge what the counter-effect would be on the attitude of holders in the future. I went into

[5] No. 137. [6] 1062 of 1 October. L/PO/6/111.

[7] In a secraphone message of 2 October, the Secretary, Food Dept., suggested to Sir J. Raisman that 200,000 tons of wheat, pledged to banks by stockists in the Punjab, should be requisitioned. MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

the whole thing in detail with Raisman and Glancy, and found both of them prepared to support, and that Glancy indeed thought that his Ministry might welcome the idea if only because it would divert the very strong tide of public criticism, which he now admits exists, from them to the *bania*!

12. I hope that Mountbatten will have arrived in Delhi by the time we get back, and I greatly look forward to talking things over with him. Rutherford is now coming for two days from the 10th to the 12th. I was a little inclined to suggest that he might wait till Wavell had taken over, and told him so. But he and I have worked very closely together over this problem; Wavell will be pretty full in the first few days; Rutherford clearly would welcome some guidance; and I think it is better that we should meet now and that he should come up again and see Wavell as soon as Wavell wants to see him.

[Para. 13, on Sir J. Herbert's resignation, omitted.]

14. This is likely to be the last letter in the long correspondence that has passed between us: for if we work to our present time-table and all goes well my party should arrive home as quickly as any bag posted later than today. I am conscious that I must frequently have burdened you with letters of excessive length; but I have always regarded the weekly letter to the Secretary of State as an opportunity to keep him in touch with the feel of things in general as well as with current problems. As I think Curzon said[8] it is in the private correspondence between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy (*pace* the Mesopotamia Commission)[9] that the real background and the real history of a régime is to be found. It is only in that correspondence that one can record with entire frankness for the benefit of the Secretary of State the daily ups and downs of the situation here; the clashes of personalities; the emergence of new figures; and the signs of danger ahead. Apart from that, I have felt that the weekly private letter, on the basis on which I have endeavoured to compose it during my time here, was from my own selfish point of view a very valuable diary of events and impressions—all the more valuable as I have always been opposed to the keeping of a regular diary by anyone who holds a post such as this. And while I hope that the private letter from this end may have been of some use to you, I would like to thank you most warmly for all the help that I have had in the private letters which you have so regularly sent me, and which have been so valuable in helping me to appreciate the atmosphere at home, and the difficulties that the Secretary of State has to face either with Cabinet colleagues or in the House, or with the Press and public opinion.

15. It has been a very long spell of office, and a very heavy one. But in many ways, though the strain has been great, I am not sure, if one can say so without complacency, that there has not been some advantage, from the point of view of the public service, in extensions which have resulted in my

serving for half as long again as the normal term of a Viceroy. For the extended period has given one the opportunity to round off a great many things that could well be started but could not easily be finished in the normal five years. It has enabled one to test out the organisation of the Governor-General's own Secretariat which came into being for the first time in 1937; it has given one the chance not only to give the Executive Council in its new guises sufficient of a run to enable it to feel confidence in itself and to settle in, but one has been able, too, to get the National Defence Council—in my judgment a thoroughly useful body—well established; and of course there is always advantage in a degree of continuity of control when one was dealing with rapidly expanding and immensely important aspects of business such as the development of war supply; the expansion of the army; and the elaboration of our defence against attacks of every kind; though that continuity, once one has got the machine working, is less important.

16. I do not propose to bore you with any general reflections! I look forward to meeting you very soon, though then again I shall not propose to weary you with arguments or representations on any aspect of the Indian problem; for I shall be *functus*, and it will be for my successor to carry the burden. But broadly speaking, I can feel as I lay down this great charge that I leave the country in pretty good trim. It is true that there is the so-called deadlock on the political stage. But no human ingenuity on my part could have avoided that deadlock, and I gravely suspect that human ingenuity will be tested to the utmost in trying to find any possible way out of it on the present basis. The deadlock itself causes no emotion in this country, and, indeed, I think it is fair to say, no interest, outside a tiny if vocal class broadly corresponding in importance to the Sorensens, Coves and Macdonalds in the House of Commons. The leaders of the revolt and the leaders of that section which alone, I suspect, passionately desires to see us out of the country (without sufficiently appreciating what the results might be from their own point of view) have neither programme nor policy. The Working Committee are in jail and forgotten. One hardly ever sees a reference to them in the Press. Gandhi is equally out of the way of doing mischief, and so long as he maintains his present point of view I trust he will so remain. Rajagopalachari is the principal mouthpiece at the moment, and Rajagopalachari's efforts are confined to

[8] 'The true story of each Viceroyalty is in reality written in the weekly private letters which are exchanged between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State . . .'. The Marquess Curzon of Kedleston, *British Government in India*, Vol. II (London, Cassell & Co, 1925), p. 129.

[9] Section C of Part XI (Causes contributing to the errors of judgment and shortcomings of responsible authorities) of the Report of the Mesopotamia Commission (Cd. 8610) was entitled 'Relations between the Secretary of State and the Governor General and their respective Councils.—Private Telegrams.' This contained criticisms (summarised in para. 28 of Part XII—Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations) of the great increase in the number of private telegrams exchanged on official business between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy.

sniping the moment a head shows—in other words, any statement by you, by me, by the *Manchester Guardian*, by a Member of Parliament, by a prominent businessman, is a good enough basis for a pronouncement by Rajagopalachari, who, good politician as he is, does not allow himself to be unduly impeded by any consideration of its consistency with what he has said before. But he has no settled policy and nothing to offer. The Muslims who have immensely strengthend their position during the last 3 or 4 years, are solid; more bitterly communal than ever; and as intensely suspicious both of the Hindus and of the possibility that His Majesty's Government may compromise with the Hindus. But I believe, as I have often said to you in these matters, that the Muslims, though they are bound to abuse us in the interests of keeping their place in the public eye and safeguarding their reputation as good nationalists, have nothing to gain from the disappearance of the British connection or from any further weakening of that connection, and do not want any such weakening. That is true in great degree of the minorities, and particularly the Scheduled Castes, for whom I am glad to think that I have been able to do a good deal, more especially in these last few years. One can never guarantee against something turning up in this country which will not unexpectedly produce trouble. But taking the situation by and large I think I can claim to be handing over to Wavell a pretty well set stage so far as the political position is concerned: though one that will need constant attention and constant personal handling.

17. So far as war effort goes, as you know India has made an immense contribution, and everything is in admirable running order. But we are going to be under a very heavy strain once the South East Asia Command gets going and this major campaign in the east develops; and I have warned you repeatedly, and through you the Cabinet, of the threat to our economic position which may be involved. You I know realise that fully; and I am more than grateful to you for all the pains you have been at to try to bring it home to those concerned in the Cabinet. But it is terribly hard to get it into the minds, I suspect, of some of your colleagues, or of some of the departments at home, and we shall have the same trouble probably with the Americans as their interest in this area grows with the development of the South East Asia Command. The danger is real and immediate. I need not develop that point. You appreciate it perfectly, and I am certain that Wavell does equally.

18. Inflation I am very unhappy about. It is a problem closely tied up of course, in certain respects, with that which I have discussed in the preceding paragraph. I think Raisman is doing his very best, and he has certainly worked immensely hard, and shown firmness and persistence in trying to get things on the right lines. But the vast amounts of money that are pouring into this country; the great credits which India is building up outside; the necessity in certain areas, for military reasons, of paying extravagant wages and the like

in order to get essential defence works prepared against time—all these in face of a progressive diminution in the available supplies of consumer goods aggravate the situation most seriously, as I know that you yourself feel. And I have more than once I think touched on the extreme deflationary value of food imports which would keep food prices and so general prices, down. I should be happier if I felt that I was leaving the situation in these regards on a sounder footing. But there is nothing for it but to hope for the best, and to continue the strenuous efforts which we are making to combat inflation by every possible means.

19. The one thing which I am definitely disturbed about is the food position, and I shall have to leave that to Wavell in an untidy state: though by the time he takes over we shall have bought a great deal of the experience that I suspect always has to be bought in handling a situation of this sort, and shall have made, I trust, the bulk of our mistakes. The Long-term Food Conference report[10] is under final examination by the provinces and States at a meeting which will now be held on the 13th at Delhi, and which ought to have concluded before Wavell assumes office. I deal elsewhere in this letter with the discussions I have been having with the Punjab, and with a new and somewhat startling proposal which we have in view for extracting a little more Punjab wheat. His Majesty's Government have helped us, and I am grateful for the help we have had; but like you I do not regard it at this stage as sufficient to turn the scales, and we shall I fear have to press you for some further concession. As you will have seen from my letter to Glancy, I have not failed to impress on the Punjab the damage which by holding wheat they may be doing to operations (and incidentally the grave damage to their own good name). But though I think I have produced more effect than Glancy would be prepared to admit, we are not yet all the way with them, and unless we can get more wheat out, there may be nothing for it, given the world interest in the present Bengal situation, but to divert more shipping and get more foodgrains into this country at the earliest possible date. But I do not intend this paragraph to be a review of the food situation—it is merely a section in the general review of my impressions of the Indian situation at the moment that I hand over.

20. Let me say a word as regards administration. I have been seriously worried for some time at the strain that is being carried by the Secretary of State's services and particularly by the European element in them. A great deal has happened since 1935; and if I were now asked for my own opinion as to the future of these services, I would say with conviction that I do not believe that the country can do without a substantial intake of Europeans (not less and preferably greater than the present), who must have behind them the protection of the Secretary of State and Parliament, and who would be needed

[10] Presumably the *Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee*; see No. 123, note 1.

not merely for the I.C.S. and the Police, which are the two vital services, but for key work in matters such as irrigation and also in most of the technical departments. I can say, again with conviction as the result of experience, that Indianisation is not proving a success. You get a small percentage of men who are of excellent quality. Hydari is one: Trivedi, now Secretary, War Department, has greatly impressed me: and there are, I think, a few others. But the average Indian is very definitely inferior to the average European in the qualities of the good administrator; and of course he is hampered in addition by the fact that the communal issue runs through everything here. That I believe to be increasingly realised by Indians themselves, though I do not think that bad administration worries people much in this country—they are very content to let things drone along so long as serious trouble is not likely to emerge for them personally. In saying what I have said, I do not overlook that it is exceedingly difficult to reconcile with Dominion Status, with wide Provincial Autonomy, the existence of a percentage of officers not beholden to Ministers, with the right of appeal to an outside authority and with certain specific obligations to the Governor or the Governor-General. But as you know (with the pessimism of one who has spent 7½ years trying to get these people to work together to produce any possible form of constructive scheme likely to be generally acceptable) I am now profoundly sceptical as to the possibility of advance of the nature that we and Parliament were so anxious to see and once hoped that we might be able to realise.

21. An important side issue of the matter I have just been discussing is the strain under which the European element is at present working. Most of these men have had no leave since the beginning of the war, and many of them were due for leave when war broke out. There has been the strain, naturally felt far more keenly by the Europeans than Indians, of condition[s] at home and of separation from wives and families. There is the further strain at the present time of the absence of any intake of fresh recruits to help to carry the weight; and if the war goes on for very long we may have to face special measures for dealing with that. And I believe that you would have the general support of Governors for doing it, and that you may very shortly find, if the strain continues, Governors pressing that special action be taken.

22. I am glad to think, as I leave, that in certain very important departments I have been able to get European successors to their present heads. The Animal Husbandry Expert, Ware, a very good man, is at the end of his time, and we have got a European to succeed him. The Archæological Department, now infinitely worse than when Woolley wrote his scathing report about it, is to have Mortimer Wheeler, and I hope that Mortimer Wheeler will get all possible assistance out here. The department at the moment is a complete waste of money; is riddled with communal faction; contains no one of any

value; and is quite useless for its purpose. My only fear is that Mortimer Wheeler may find it so shocking a business to remedy that he will lose heart. But he will have seen Woolley and must know of the worst by now. For the Imperial Agricultural Research Institute, again I hope to get a good man. The present incumbent is a worthy person; but like most Indians he suffers from the absence of the energy and capacity to direct and organise work of that type.

23. But broadly speaking I think that one can leave this country pretty well satisfied with general morale when consideration is taken of the peculiar difficulties presented by this mass of communities, races, and traditions, to so large an extent unprepared by education or familiarity with the serious problem that confronts us all to take the shocks that have been administered to India as elsewhere over these last few years. The risk of panic I would put very low—we have passed the point at which danger was unfamiliar; and no general inference can be drawn from the confusion and distress that might occur in a particular area under the stress of bombing or the like.

24. Well, there is the position broadly, as I see it. I do not think I understate its good points, though no one is better aware than I am how great the temptation is to be smug as one hands over! But in letting you have these farewell words I would like also to thank you most warmly, and through you to thank the India Office, for all the consistent help and support that I have had and for the valuable advice and the information that have always been so readily available to me. If I have managed to be lucky enough to get through this business alive and without discredit, I realise fully to what an extent close association with the Secretary of State of the day has been a factor in one's doing so.

Till we meet!

157

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/12

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *1 October 1943*

I hope you were not too disappointed by the terms of the War Cabinet conclusion[1] with regard to sending food to India. They had before them not only a further strong memorandum[2] of my own, but also a no less cogent and earnest one from the Chiefs of Staff[3] based on Auchinleck,[4] and all of them, from Winston downwards, are undoubtedly alive to the gravity of the situation. At the same time, they are no less conscious of the difficulties of the shipping situation and also of the food situation nearer home. Famine in Greece has been, I imagine, even worse than in Bengal and one of the most urgent needs

[1] No. 139. [2] No. 132. [3] No. 119. [4] No. 102.

of the immediate future will be the shipping of food into Greece to help the insurgents, of whom something like 50,000 are under arms today and playing a really important part in the whole war effort. For this purpose the Middle East has been trying very hard to accumulate a stock, and it is part of this stock that is to be depleted to help make up the 200,000 tons which are to be sent to India by the end of the year. The gist of the Cabinet's conclusion was that they would now concentrate on replenishing and increasing that stock so that in the light of the situation at the end of the year it could be decided how much of it might be available for India or how much was necessarily required for the immediate relief of such parts of Greece as we may be able to occupy or send food in for.

2. As regards Iraq barley, I agree that even the reduction from £40 to £30 per ton which Woolton has been able to secure leaves it an extortionate price. But I am sure you are right in not boggling over this. After all it only amounts to some slight ultimate reduction in this portentous accumulation of sterling credits. In so far as that has been to some extent swollen by high profits in India there may even be a certain rough equity in an offset which one might otherwise think excessive.

3. Meanwhile I hope that when Parliament meets again I may be in a position to show that the efforts being made at the Centre and in Bengal are yielding some result. For the moment the telegrams mostly stress the growing intensity of the famine and, not unnaturally perhaps, also stress the need for imports. In view of the actual position at this end, the overstressing of this particular aspect of the problem is a little awkward.

4. Rutherford obviously seems to be getting down to his job and I hope the talks you are having with him over the week-end will be really helpful to you both. I must say I feel a certain sympathy with Suhrawardy and his government at the scandalous way in which Fazlul Huq and Co. are belabouring them for what were in fact their own laches. I sincerely hope, for that reason if for no other, as well as for the communal feeling it would arouse that we may be able to get through without reversion to Section 93. But, as I have said before, I shall have no difficulty in the House of Commons if we were compelled to adopt that course.

5. I wish, both in connection with this food question, and more generally in connection with the whole inflationary situation in India, it were possible to get more effectively after the profiteers. It is pretty obvious that they have made some scores of millions of pounds between them, which no doubt they will divide between buying out British concerns and financing more Congress trouble later on. To that extent, I have a certain sympathy with Winston and Cherwell. On the other hand, I do not suppose that the Indian machine could

have been got to move as it has moved except with the prospect of good profits, or that the taxing side of the machine has been effective enough to prevent large scale evasion.

6. I was glad to see in the enclosure to your letter of September 15th[5] that your standard cloth scheme is having some effect and hope that it will be increasingly effective in spoiling the profiteers' game and also bringing the peasant's money out of his pocket (or its equivalent!) and his grain on to the market.

7. I confess I was much interested and not a little attracted by the "Britasian" programme for the resettlement of the Andamans and Nicobars.[6] I am by no means sure that something of that sort is not the best way of tackling the problem and making an effective coherent community of them. They would certainly be in a good strategic position and might find employment in a good many directions connected with sea and air transport. Looking back, one can never help regretting that we did not keep Kashmir after the Sikh Wars and use it for the large scale settlement both of old British Officers and soldiers and also for Anglo-Indians. If India is to be really capable of holding its own in the future without direct British control from outside, I am not sure that it will not need an increasing infusion of stronger Nordic blood, whether by settlement or intermarriage or otherwise. Possibly it has been a real mistake of ours in the past not to encourage Indian Princes to marry English wives for a succession of generations and so breed a a more virile type of native ruler. Perhaps all that may yet come about.

Hell!.

L.

8. I am grateful to you for letting me have your considered views[7] about Raisman. It looks as though there will be a difficult decision to be made in relation to the Finance Membership before very long. I should agree with you that Raisman is not of the type to which one would look for a Governor. Moreover, unless I am wrong, he has had no connection with Provincial administration, except through the eyes of the Central Revenue Department, since the early days of his service. We should be

Since S/S. has mentioned the matter to me, he will perhaps allow me to say that his first premise is in my opinion, an entire illusion, because he won't get *a reasonable bargain out of any Indian F.M.—why should he expect to?*

L.

[5] MSS. EUR. F. 125/138.

[6] Para. 7 (omitted from No. 107) of Lord Linlithgow's letter of 10–13 September referred to a memorandum by the Britasian Colony Committee proposing that the Andaman and Nicobar Islands should be reserved as a Crown Colony for the Anglo-Indian, Anglo-Burman, Anglo-Malayan and 'domiciled' communities. MSS. EUR. F. 125/12.

[7] The reference is to No. 13, para. 19; No. 53, para. 12; and omitted paras. in No. 107.

doing him no disservice therefore in relation to his ambitions, if we kept him on as Finance Member for a bit. I am glad you have let me know of the doubts you now feel about that but I cannot say that I am optimistic of getting a good man to replace him from here where all the people with the right sort of qualifications are deeply immersed in our own problems.

9. There is of course this to be said for the appointment of an Indian Finance Member, not of course an ordinary Indian money-maker, but the most effective person whom one might find in the Council: and that is that when it comes to a real bargaining issue between India and the Treasury over the accumulated sterling credits it may well become increasingly difficult for a European Finance Member to convince his Indian colleagues that any bargain he may arrive at with the Treasury is a reasonable one. It may at any rate be argued that an arrangement which commends itself to an Indian Finance Member may have a better chance of acceptance without bringing about a general resignation. However, that is a problem which Wavell will have to consider after he has had time to look round. I do not gather that so far he has formed any definite views on that question.

10. I have just received your letter of the 13th September[8] on the future of the Indian States and am most grateful to you for having found it possible before the end of your term of office to record the views which you have formed after your long experience of this difficult problem. I have so far had time only to glance through your letter but I shall certainly give it most careful study. It will not be possible to reply formally to it before you vacate office so I should like at once to thank you for this valuable review. I have given copy to Wavell who will I am sure find it of great help to have this statement of your conclusions on so difficult a subject.

[Para. 11, on affairs in Ratlam State, omitted.]

12. I have just seen the full reports on the devastating floods which occurred in South Rajputana as a result of sudden heavy rains in the Aravalli Hills at the end of July. We had of course heard about these floods before but I had not realised previously that the damage was so great. Unless you think that it would be inappropriate at this stage, I would be grateful if you could convey to the States Governments involved an expression of my concern at this disaster and of my sympathy with the victims.

Action?
(I think it's too late.)
L.

13. I am most grateful to you for all the trouble you have taken over this question of a social and economic policy. Your letter of the 14th September[9] is most valuable and will be a great help to myself and no doubt (if, as I hope, you leave it on record in India) to Wavell in dealing with this subject.

I am glad to say that Cripps and Bevin have not pressed their ideas to the point of bringing them up in the Cabinet though they have talked them over with Wavell. I now think it is improbable that the matter will come up on [in] the Cabinet before Wavell goes off. I propose, however, to let Cripps and Bevin and others interested in this subject presently have a copy of your letter, as I feel sure that they ought to have in mind the important considerations which you have put forward.

[Para. 14, on General Auchinleck's letter to General Brooke recommending the return of Indian Divisions in the Middle East; and para. 15, on Empire conversations on civil aviation, omitted.]

16. Writing to you last time[10] about the prospects of the new appointment to the Exchequer I had frankly not thought of John Anderson because I did not think that the Prime Minister would wish to spare him from the excellent work he has been doing as co-ordinator at large. No doubt he will make a good Chancellor, though perhaps not an imaginative one. From our point of view he will have the advantage of at any rate knowing a good deal about Indian conditions, though perhaps not so much about Indian finance as Grigg. Attlee will do competently as co-ordinator, but has not the same personal authority. Cranborne on the other hand is a very popular appointment with the Dominions. Taking the changes all round, I think they undoubtedly strengthen the Cabinet, though there is a disposition outside to suggest that some new blood might have been brought in.

I have no *shares in the old firm!*
L.

[8] No. 111. [9] No. 113. [10] No. 137, para. 4.

158

Sir T. Rutherford (Bengal) to the Marquess of Linlithgow

MSS. EUR. F. 125/43

GOVT. HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *2 October 1943*

Dear Lord Linlithgow,
With reference to your letter dated 15th September,[1] here is the fuller report than was possible in telegrams of the Bengal situation as it appears to me.

2. *Political.*—The corrupt Fazlul Huq administration set the ball of mismanagement rolling and the present Ministry which took over at a very

[1] Asking for a full and frank review of the Bengal situation and the means by which it could be remedied, for transmission to the War Cabinet. R/3/2/49.

difficult period did not improve matters by chopping and changing its policy from time to time. It has been hampered by bitter political controversy, which Suhrawardy's previous reputation facilitated and which has considerably added to the suspicions about its administration throughout the rest of India; by reluctance to disclose the full facts of the situation, namely that practically all imports were being devoted to feeding Calcutta and its industries and the various Services classed as essential, and that the districts were largely being left to fend for themselves; by a far from strong and overburdened administrative machine; by the prevalent corrupt mentality of both the public and the lower ranks of officialdom. The grain trade is largely in the hands of the Hindus, and quite apart from commercial greed, I suspect that political feelings have had much to do with their struggle to defeat the efforts of the present Government to bring down prices to a reasonable level. The big cultivators who would have surplus stocks are also mainly Hindus, and putting aside panic or greed are also affected by political feelings. I have not been able to ascertain properly why the anti-hoarding drive in the mofussil was not followed up by taking physical possession of considerable stocks for Government reserve, but I gather that Pinnell, who was all for free trade, though no longer Director of Civil Supplies, was consulted, and it was finally decided to requisition only 25 per cent. of stocks over 300 maunds from cultivators and merchants with the proviso that a minimum of 300 maunds be left with the owner, though District and Sub-divisional Officers were given discretion to requisition more if necessary. Actually, no wholesale requisitioning seems to have been done, but Sub-divisional Officers have lists of where the stuff is supposed to be "frozen". Ayyar tells me that one of the main difficulties was what price to pay, while Suhrawardy advances the difficulty of collecting small quantities of grain from all over a country where communications are notoriously bad. He is certainly right about this as my own excursions in 24-Parganas[2] and Midnapore have proved to me. He maintains that the investigation had the effect of bringing out stocks as big cultivators lent or sold their surpluses to others while the merchants brought their stocks on to the market. As regards the later drive in Calcutta, Stevens says it revealed very little stock they did not know about, but I feel that it was very inefficiently conducted and suspect some biggish Muslim merchants would have also been involved over hoarding. The Police were not employed, and quite recently the Commissioner of Police has found some substantial stocks hidden away. There is still pending a scandalous case over forged permits for drawing wheat, and *atta* from Government stocks in which a Muslim official, appointed by Fazlul Huq, and merchants, Muhammadans and Hindus, who subscribe liberally to relief kitchens, were involved. I have not yet had time to look into this. Then the appointment of Ispahani as sole purchasing agent, about whose premature knowledge of the free trade scheme I already reported to you from Bihar, has created an opportunity for

making a stink; and I have since learnt that he had already bought large quantities in Orissa before the declaration of free trade, which however Suhrawardy assures me he made over to Bengal Government at cost price. I have verified from Campbell of Shaw Wallace & Co., that his firm was approached first by the Ministry and that they refused on the ground that with their other commitments to buy for industry, they had neither the finance, nor the organisation to undertake the task, and recommended their competitors, the Ispahanis, as best able to do so. European opinion is that the Ispahanis are the most honest Indian firm in Calcutta, but there is some doubt as to what their sub-agents may have been up to in buying at one price and invoicing to Government at a higher rate. All supplies bought by the firm have been delivered or will be delivered as soon as released from Bihar and Orissa. They are paid Rs. 1 per cent., instead of on a maundage rate, which I think too high. In Bihar after comparing maundage rates and ordinary purchasing commissions and the average price paid, I fixed it at 12 annas per cent. to our Trade Adviser and purchasing agent, Gurusaran Lal. . . .[3] I came here with great suspicion of Suhrawardy and he is undoubtedly sly, but so far as I can make out he is, subject always to his political background which weakens policy, trying to do what he can to deal with the situation, and works hard. The trouble is that he wants to go into details too much instead of confining himself to broad lines of action and wasted a lot of time wandering about India instead of getting down to the job of seeing that a properly organised and staffed Food and Supplies Department was got together with a strong man at the head of it. When I arrived, Stevens as Joint Chief Secretary and Civil Defence Commissioner had been giving most of his time to the problem for three weeks, but without the Minister to back him was having all sorts of difficulties about getting officers he wanted, and as you know the matter was complicated by the question of who was to be Chief Secretary when Blair went. Sir Nazimuddin, the Chief Minister, subject to his ideas of political patronage, Mukerjea, the Revenue Minister, who is responsible for Relief, and Muazzamuddin, the Minister for Agriculture, are I think reasonably honest. I have not bothered myself so far about the others as they do not count over this food problem. Communal considerations in regard to appointments of Indian officers, even of the I.C.S., are a nuisance. Politically Bengal with its background of communalism and the average mentality of its people has been utterly corrupted by 6 years of Provincial Autonomy.

3. *Administrative Machine.*—The Police Force, as in Bihar, is understaffed but not so badly. Railway Protection Police, having regard to demands of the Army, are definitely insufficient, but there are neither the facilities nor the staff for training more, and existing Police Schools are full to overflowing.

[2] See No. 125. [3] Personal comment, not relating to Mr Lal, omitted.

I have had discussions with the I.G. who has brought to my notice various matters in which he thinks action is necessary, but I have left these aside until I see light over the food shortage. Moreover, as I am no longer Pooh-Bah,[4] I have to walk delicately as Agag[5] about suggesting further permanent expenditure to a Ministry. The I.G. (Mannooch) seems a sensible fellow and the Police Officers I have met so far, such as the Commissioner of Police, the D.I.G., C.I.D., impress me favourably. In the districts the police are overwhelmed with work: Midnapore has had 1,500 dacoities in 8 months and their task is made all the more difficult by the congestion in the jails, dacoits being let off on bail by the courts, and the antagonism between the High Court and the Executive. The Local Government have been so "browned off" by the High Court that they are afraid to issue any direct instructions to their Magistrates as to how to deal with cases, and content themselves with instructions to District Magistrates to instruct Public Prosecutors.

4. *High Court.*—The less said about this institution as at present constituted the better. I made a personal request to the Chief Justice to issue a direction from the High Court to Judges and Magistrates about the kind of sentences appropriate for convictions of profiteering and disobedience of the Food Control Orders, or to agree to the Local Government doing so. His reply was an attack on the Ministry, and the suggestion that it was sufficient to instruct Public Prosecutors. The High Court's criticisms, however, on the Government's methods of dealing with detention cases were I consider justifiable, and I have turned down a proposal that we should re-issue a certain delegations [*sic*] to District Magistrates and Sub-divisional Officers of powers under Rule 26-D.I.R. subject to report for review by Government.

5. *Provincial Services.*—I have not yet had an opportunity to assess the Provincial Services, but a suggestion of mine that a P.C.S. Collector should be brought into a short leave vacancy in the Secretariat, was apparently received with horror. The Medical and Public Health Services, I am given to understand, are poor and certainly D.P.H. did not impress me. Surgeon-General, whom I knew before in Madras, ought to be good. He has been seriously ill, so I have had no opportunity of discussing with him matters such as alleged misappropriation, by temporarily employed medical men, of quinine and medical supplies sent to Midnapore.

6. *I.C.S.*—There are too few for the work to be done, and many of them are, I suspect, disgusted and disheartened by what they have been through. Too many of the good men have been drafted out of the Province, and there seems to be a dearth of efficient men in the senior ranks of the Executive, partly because so many of those now senior chose the Judicial side. Consequently, with the natural reluctance to let efficient men in the Secretariat go out to the Districts, we are just at present hard put to it to find good and sufficiently

senior men for the post of Commissioner without involving unjustifiable pass-overs of men in the Secretariat and claims under the next below rule. On the whole, I would say the key posts in the Secretariat are held by good men, but as you know, I am doubtful about the Chief Secretary's application and real knowledge of the Province. Stevens complains bitterly about the lack of energy and enterprise of some of the District Officers. I have sent out a personal letter to all that they must get down to this food business and let less important matters slide. Of two I have met one was definitely above the average and the other was fair but suffered a little from inexperience.

7. *Present Food Situation.*—The fundamentals are:—

(1) The loss of the Burma "Rice Ukraine" and consequent inability of the rest of India to make up Bengal's own real shortage due to bad harvests, cyclone and floods, and, from the Bengal point of view, unwise exports overseas.
(2) The greed of the trader and panic hoarding by cultivators; failure to control prices which, with shortages in other parts of India and Ceylon, was perhaps well nigh impossible.
(3) The dubiety of all available statistics and therefore lack of accurate knowledge of what the real shortage is.
(4) The emphasis on keeping Calcutta fully supplied.
(5) Bad communications made worse by the "Boat Denial Policy" of the Army.
(6) The injury to communications by the Damodar Flood, and pressure on the Railways for Military Traffic.
(7) Doubt about the continuance of supplies from the Punjab and regularity of receipt.
(8) Difficulty of switching the people over to a change of diet.
(9) Suspicions throughout India of the *bona fides* and efficiency of the Bengal Government not unjustified by some of their actions and mistakes.
(10) Calcutta a bottleneck for wheat, as it is the only place where there are flour and *atta* mills; failure of the local Supplies Department previously to procure despatches of wheat products direct to the districts, and now when we are trying to arrange this, Railway's inability to move more than 15 wagons a day by these cross routes according to Sir Colin Garbett and Biscoe.
(11) Failure of the Bengal Government to really organise their Supplies Department on a proper scale—it still requires strengthening.
(12) Lack of any real knowledge where supplies, if any, within the country, are available, and which again I am not surprised at as the Government

[4] The Lord High Everything Else in Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado*. [5] 1 Samuel xv, 32.

have no village organisation other than the *chowkidars* under their direct control. The local Union Boards do not seem to be of much use for such purposes though they are being used to supervise relief.

That there was a shortage, even after all allowance is made for panic hoarding and profit hoarding, admits now of no doubt. The population is 60 millions with a curious proportion of 3 above 15 to 2 below 15. Allowing 1 lb. a day to those above and ½ lb. a day to those below 15 as minimum *subsistence* ration, the total quantity required per day is 48 million pounds or in round figures 7,821,000 tons a year or 651,000 tons a month. This I find tallies with what Somerset Butler tells me is the accepted figure, namely full ration for 80 per cent. of the population. The 1942–43 harvest (*aus* and *aman*) only produced about 6,900,000 tons. The 1941–42 harvest was a good one, and according to the available statistics there should have been a carry-over of a million tons. A good deal of it was however exported, and in 1942 consumption would, under the war conditions, undoubtedly be more than mere subsistence rate in many parts of the Province, and according to the May census (or anti-hoarding drive for what it was worth) stocks of rice in the country were 3½ crore maunds or 1,250,000 tons which was insufficient to last until the *aus* paddy should begin to come on to the market in late September. In fact, after allowing that 700,000 tons of the carryover from 1941–42 was available, the shortage was in the neighbourhood of 655,000 tons. The *aus* crop this year is optimistically estimated to have produced 3,193,000 tons of rice, and if we have no more misfortunes, the *aman* crop, which is in good condition, is estimated to produce 8,885,000 tons which should begin to come on the market in January. Theoretically the *aus* paddy crop should see us through till December and beyond, but the cultivator is hanging on to it like grim death till he sees how the *aman* harvest goes, and the shortage of supply in June to September is undoubtedly responsible for the famine conditions we now see. It is probable that the Government's present attempt to impose a wholesale price limit of Rs. 20 per maund for rice is partly responsible for this holding back. The result of the struggle with the trade and the bigger cultivator is still in the balance.

8. According to figures given by the North-Western Railway, 265,100 tons of foodstuffs were sent to Bengal from the Punjab from 1st May to September 27th, but that would only suffice to keep Calcutta going for the period if it were fed on wheat only. Statement I attached[6] shows what was brought in on Government account from 1st March to 30th August—approximately 190,000 tons of food after allowing for wastage on wheat—and its distribution. The Punjab figures quoted above would include a large part of the wheat and wheat products—probably at least 50,000 tons—shown in Statement I. I am not able to ascertain what came from elsewhere than the Punjab on private account, but adding 265,000 and 150,000 [140,000?] tons (190,000–50,000)

we have 415,000 tons received leaving a deficit of about 240,000 tons (655,000–415,000) to make up. I have not been able to get from Stevens who guesses 200,000 tons, or anybody else any more accurate estimate of the shortage, and so have troubled you with these not very satisfactory calculations of my own, which suggest that we must get 240,000 tons of foodstuffs, preferably as much rice as possible, within the next three months. Your telegram No. 427–S.C.[7] of the 29th September showing probable receipts of 70,000 tons rice was comforting and that together with what we get of wheat and other grains from the Punjab and the United Provinces and possibly from overseas should enable us to pull through if the rate of supply is kept up. But even so, there will be many deaths among a population riddled with malaria and other diseases. The machinery for collecting prompt information of such deaths seems to be very defective; bad communications and lack of village establishment again.

9. Calcutta has been adequately fed, though at high prices, throughout, and the destitute and emaciated thousands one sees in the streets are professional beggars plus an influx of old men and women, widows, and deserted wives frequently with children, who have come in from the adjoining districts attracted by charitable relief. There is also a fair sprinkling of out of work agricultural labourers who are normally kept going by the bigger cultivators during the off-season. Practically all the relief centres run by private bodies receive their supplies at concession rates from Government supplies. As you have already been made aware, I am having great difficulty in persuading the Ministry to forcibly remove these people to existing evacuee camps outside the city and eventually to their own homes or near them where Government relief centres have been set up, usually under the charge of the Presidents of Union Boards helped by local non-official effort. The total number at such relief centres is stated to be 118,000 in Calcutta and 840,000 in the mofussil.

10. The districts most affected by natural disasters, bad crops, scarcity and the high prices—the latter have hit the lower middle class very hard—are as follows:—Midnapore, Howrah, 24-Parganas, Bakarganj, Noakhali, Bankura and Dacca. Statement No. II[8] shows numbers under relief a week ago, and it is probably more now. In Midnapore the supplies of food for even a minimum ration were definitely not enough, and I have ordered it to be increased. It is at present difficult to get supplies to Bakarganj and Dacca and Noakhali from Calcutta—and supplies are probably deficient there. Test Relief Works in which 100,000 people were employed were started in Midnapore from March to end of June 1943. The Famine Code has not been applied as we simply have not the food to give the prescribed ration. During this time of the year with the land under water, relief works are practically impossible and the

[6] Not printed. [7] MSS. EUR. F. 125/43. [8] Not printed.

present system of relief, though liable to abuses, is more flexible. Deaths from debility and starvation average at least 1,000 a week. The villagers themselves are getting callous about it. In his fortnightly report one Commissioner quotes an Union Board President as saying "what does it matter—they are the useless ones". You have had my telegraphic report[9] of what I saw in Midnapore district and the ominous signs there, coupled with the quite encouraging appearance of large elements of the population. There has been lavish distribution of seed and money loans—too lavish I am inclined to think—and with little prospect of recovery. The total expenditure on relief in Midnapore and 24-Parganas in 1942–43 was 114·13 lakhs, and in the current financial year up to date 241·66 lakhs. Over 120 lakhs have also been spent in other affected districts. The picture is indeed gloomy and unless we can pump supplies in and somehow or other keep down prices it will be worse before the end of December.

11. Statement III[10] shows the organisation of the Civil Supplies Department we are trying with great difficulty to build up under Stevens.

I am anxious that we should come to an early decision as to policy and arrangements in regard to price control and procurement of portion of the *aman* crop, of which we ought to have 500,000 tons under our hands for Calcutta alone, especially as the scheme for procurement of portion of the *aus* crop seems to have been a flop through being planned too late, with bad agents. The net result is so far about 7½ lakhs of maunds of paddy and rice out of an estimated yield of 3,193,000 tons! I have not so far attempted to discuss this with Stevens or Suhrawardy as the former has had enough on his mind for the present. Another thing I have to keep in mind is somebody to take on Stevens' work should he fall ill—he has been suffering from dysentery recently—and I can think of nobody better than Braund who is in intimate touch with the general position and has, as you know, been helping with the rationing scheme. I hope if I should want him, the Centre will release him. I am glad also to be able to report that a competent retired officer of the I.C.S., Gladding, former Finance Secretary and now Manager, Calcutta Electric Corporation, has volunteered to assist the Rationing Officer for two months. His Company are paying his salary. I asked the various Indian Chambers of Commerce if they could assist with competent young men for Assistants to Stevens, e.g., from Birlas. I got the usual promises of help, but no actual offers have come in. In rationing one of our difficulties is going to be storage and distribution and Kirby has pointed out the weakness of the organisation so far in that respect. I am glad to say the difficulties between him, Stevens and Suhrawardy over the question of shops, Government or retailers, have been resolved.

I am sending 5 copies of this letter in case you should wish to send any home by Air Mail.

12. In conclusion, if I am to be held responsible by the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for getting Bengal out of the hole it is in, I feel I must press for some amendment of Section 57 of the Act or introduction of a new Section 57–A, which will give me power to act in my discretion or at least on individual judgment in this grave emergency. I have already reported to you[11] my difficulties with the Chief Minister and Suhrawardy over removal of the destitutes from Calcutta, and Shahabuddin (Nazim's own brother) told me today that the matter was informally discussed in Cabinet in my absence, and only himself and one other Minister were in favour of the more rapid action I wanted. Though there is a demand for Section 93, largely inspired by the enemies of the Ministry, I am not prepared to certify in the terms of the Section "that a situation has arisen in which the Government of the Province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of this Act".

Yours sincerely,

T. G. RUTHERFORD[12]

[9] See No. 151. [10] Not printed. [11] See Nos. 125 and 151.

[12] In response to tel. 22556 of 2 October from Mr Amery asking for Sir T. Rutherford's report urgently, Lord Linlithgow telegraphed it *in extenso* in tels. 515–S.C. and 516–S.C. of 7 October. L/E/8/3297.

159

War Cabinet

Committee on India. I (43) 3rd Meeting

L/PO/6/108a: ff 48–50

Those present at this meeting held at 11 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 4 October 1943 at 4.30 pm were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Sir John Anderson, Viscount Simon, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir Edward Bridges (Secretary)

Also present were: Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Sir D. Monteath, Mr E. M. Jenkins

The Committee met to consider the Memorandum prepared by the Secretary of State for India in accordance with the conclusions at the last Meeting[1] (I. (43) 4).[2]

The Committee went through the Memorandum paragraph by paragraph and made a number of amendments. These are set out in the Annex to these Minutes. It was agreed that the Memorandum, as so amended, should be submitted to the War Cabinet.

The Committee asked the Lord President of the Council to submit a short report[3] to the Cabinet on their behalf, stating that all the members of the

[1] No. 152. [2] No. 155. [3] No. 160.

Committee, with the exception of the Secretary of State for War, were in agreement with the Memorandum of the Secretary of State for India, as revised.

The Secretary of State for War circulated to the Committee copies of the note of dissent which he proposed to submit to the War Cabinet.

It was agreed this should be appended to the Lord President of the Council's Memorandum.

Annex to No. 159

AMENDMENT AGREED TO IN [ENCLOSURE TO] I. (43) 4

Second Paragraph

1. The first sentence should end as follows:—

". . . with a view to the inclusion of Political Leaders in his Executive Council."

2. In the next sentence of the second paragraph the word "only" should be omitted after the word "invitation", and the word "absolutely" should be omitted in the last sentence of the paragraph.

Third Paragraph

3. The various conditions should be numbered (i), (ii) and (iii).

Page 2

4. The sentence on the top of the page[4] should be altered to read as follows:—
". . . civil disobedience. (iii) accept the following principles, viz., that the ultimate constitutional settlement must be based . . ."

5. In lines 5 and 12 of page 2,[5] the word "coalition" should be omitted.

6. In line 25 on page 3,[6] the words "British Commonwealth" should be substituted for "Empire".

Annexure "A"

line 2

7. For "deadlock" substitute "situation".

8. The last half of the last sentence should read as follows:—
"... but I intend, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, to examine whether a fresh attempt would appear to have good prospects of success."

Annexure "B"

9. The first sentence should read as follows:—
"H.M. Government's aim is directed towards the creation of an atmosphere in India which will rally the Indian people to the maximum war effort and at the same time assist the promotion of the solution of the Constitutional problem in a manner consistent with India remaining within the British Commonwealth of Nations."

10. The second sentence should read as follows:—

"In pursuing this aim H.M. Government consider that the new Viceroy should be authorised to approach the Political Leaders in India, as and when he considers it desirable, but should consult the War Cabinet as to the time and form of any invitation to be issued."

11. The fourth sentence should start "Any invitation".

12. In the fifth and sixth lines from the end[7] the following words should be omitted:—

"and until an agreed Indian-made Constitution is evolved and brought into effect."

[4] i.e. p. 341 line 35 in this vol. beginning 'Civil Disobedience, as well as accept the main principles . . .'.
[5] i.e. p. 341 last line and p. 342 line 6 in this vol.
[6] The reference should be to p. 2 line 24 of the draft War Cabinet Paper; i.e. p. 342 line 19 in this vol.
[7] i.e. p. 344 lines 8–9 in this vol.

160

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 436

L/PO/6/108a: f 45

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL AND DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

4 October 1943

The Secretary of State for India informed me that the Viceroy Designate desired guidance on the policy which he should pursue in dealing with the political deadlock in India. In the absence in North America of the Prime Minister, I arranged for the reconstitution of the India Committee which was appointed in February 1942 under my chairmanship "to consider the present position in India and to make recommendations."[1]

[1] [Note in War Cabinet Paper:] The Ministers serving on this Committee and their present offices are as follows:—

The Right Hon. C. R. Attlee, M.P., Lord President of the Council and Deputy Prime Minister (*Chairman*).
The Right Hon. Sir John Anderson, M.P., Chancellor of the Exchequer.
The Right Hon. Viscount Simon, K.C., Lord Chancellor.
The Right Hon. L. S. Amery, M.P., Secretary of State for India.
The Right Hon. Sir James Grigg, M.P., Secretary of State for War.
The Right Hon. Sir Stafford Cripps, K.C., M.P., Minister of Aircraft Production.
The Right Hon. Field-Marshal Viscount Wavell, Viceroy (Designate) attended the three Meetings of the Committee.
The Right Hon. Viscount Halifax attended the first Meeting, but was prevented by absence from attending the two subsequent Meetings.

2. The Committee have held three meetings[2] and have considered a Memorandum[3] by the Viceroy Designate with an Annexure elaborating the lines of the invitation which might be issued to the leaders of the different parties to join in private discussions.

3. With the exception of the Secretary of State for War (whose note of Dissent is appended), all the members of the Committee agree with the proposals set out in the Secretary of State for India's Memorandum (W.P. (43) 435)[4] and recommend that the Viceroy should be given a general authority to proceed on the basis set out in that Memorandum, and in accordance with the Directive appended thereto as Annexure B.

C. R. A.

Enclosure to No. 160

NOTE OF DISSENT BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR

1. I am in complete disagreement with the recommendations of the India Committee.

2. I regard them as being in essence an instruction to Lord Wavell that, if and when he thinks the occasion suitable (with the implication that he is to work towards creating a suitable occasion), he is free to ask the War Cabinet for permission to invite the main Indian political leaders, including Gandhi and Nehru, to a secret round-table conference in Viceroy's House to discuss the question of their participation in the Viceroy's Council. It is to be understood that when this happens the Cabinet can object only on the ground that the moment is inopportune.

3. I note that the political leaders will be required to declare in advance that they will be whole-heartedly behind the war effort, and that, in any consideration that may be given to the future constitution of India, they accept the principle that it must be an agreed one. But the fact of the invitation and the substance of the discussions are bound to become public with the result that Gandhi will have, at a stroke, reinstated himself in a position where he is able to discuss with the Viceroy on equal terms and is once more one of two equal kings in Brentford.[5] The effect upon our friends in India, including the sepoy, the minor official and the police, will be little short of calamitous.

4. There is, too, the worse possibility that Gandhi should once more direct his nominees to take office with the intention of using their new position to subvert British control and to hinder the war effort. With all the demands on India which will be made by the South-East Asia Command there will be abundant opportunities, and Gandhi can be relied upon to use them with consummate skill and ingenuity.

5. I am ready to enlarge upon my views in discussion. I boil them down to this brief summary.

6. We have made a most generous offer to India. It has been rejected mainly at the instance of Gandhi. In the process of rejection Gandhi made it clear that in no circumstances would he help in the war against Japan, and that he would not, in fact, be a party to active resistance against a Japanese invasion at all. But his doctrine of non-violence did not prevent him from instigating a violent rebellion against the British at a time when India was in great peril from the Japanese. He was consequently locked up with most of his important followers. The British Government have said that, if he forswears active hostility to the war effort, he can be released, and that in the meantime the Cripps offer stands. The responsibility is, therefore, with Gandhi. In my view it is clear that Gandhi has no intention of collaborating or, indeed, of ceasing from hindering. If, therefore, the British Government take the initiative in inviting him to collaborate, one of three results will follow.

7. The first is that Gandhi will refuse to co-operate, in which case there will be no more harm than that of causing great bewilderment in the minds of the friends and supporters of this country and great uncertainty in everybody else's except that of Congress. In spite of our declarations, we shall once more have made advances to Congress and thrown over our friends. Alternatively, he will seek elucidations and start his usual course of arguments. He is likely in that case very quickly to get the British Government into a false position where they will be forced to release him without his having forsworn his past. Again, great uncertainty and alarm will have been caused to our friends and, what is more, Gandhi will be at large, free to plan rebellion again. Or, thirdly, he will accept the Viceroy's invitation, in which case he will have the choice of two possible courses. He can either work for a breakdown, but in such a way that the blame for it can be thrown upon the British Government or upon the Muslims. The other course, which is perhaps much the worse one, would be to patch up an agreement which he has no intention of working except to his advantage and to the harm of this country and India alike.

8. My conclusion is that, after a study of the history of the last twenty-five years, I have no doubt that a settlement in India is impossible so long as Gandhi is alive. When he is dead I believe that things will be very different, and I urge that the British Government will hasten rather than delay a solution of their problem if in the meantime they quite deliberately work to diminish Gandhi's importance and let the responsibility for breaking the present deadlock rest squarely upon him. Any other course will be fraught with the gravest detriment to the Allied war effort in the Far East.

P. J. G.

[2] See Nos. 120, 152 and 159. [3] No. 135.
[4] This was the reference given to the Enclosure to No. 155 as amended by the Annex to No. 159.
[5] See No. 120, note 2.

161

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 441

L/PO/6/108a: ff 41–2

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *5 October 1943*

My colleagues may be interested to see the following summary of a recent press article by Mr. Rajagopalachariar which is relevant to matters which have been under discussion in the India Committee and which will come before the Cabinet this week.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 161

Mr. Rajagopalachariar and the "Cripps Offer."

Mr. Rajagopalachariar, in a contribution to the Annual Number of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, recently appealed "for the organising of a National acceptance of Sir Stafford Cripps' scheme of April 1942" containing the British Government's immediate and post-war constitutional proposals for India. Mr. Rajagopalachariar attacks "the soul-killing negative attitude" of the people of India and their leaders, and their refusal to consider any scheme "to correct past mistakes." He is of the opinion that the withdrawal of the Congress Ministries from eight Provinces was wrong, and deeply regrets that "through mismanagement we lost the magnificent opportunities which, in the counter-balancing of good and evil in this world, the war presented us. It will be a double tragedy if we do not save at least the years immediately following the end of the war for vital constructive effort." "The sending of the Cripps Mission to India," Mr. Rajagopalachariar adds, "was an act of political insight which gave the advantage to British Imperialism, while our rejection of the offer betrayed a lamentable lack of foresight. It was a great mistake to have broken off negotiations when, for whatever reason, the British Government was in its most yielding mood. With the whole country deeply anxious over the problems of food and clothing, many people should now be feeling in their heart of hearts that the power to deal with these problems at the Centre, and with great authority in the Provincial field, is worth taking up on any terms."

Mr. Rajagopalachariar draws a picture of the present Indian situation, and points out the fallacy of regarding the Indo-British conflict as "a struggle between arrogant Imperialism and uncompromising Nationalism." "The truth is," he says, "that the forces concerned are many, and the conflict many-sided.

British Imperial politics always have been a mixture of national self-interest and certain truly noble ideals, whereas Indian Nationalism is not the irresistible longing of a homogeneous and united people ready to sacrifice their all in their thirst for freedom. The politically conscious section of the Muslims set up a rival feeling to Nationalism, based on a religion which has the widest appeal among the Muslim masses. Indian industrialists are making their pile by quiet and uninterrupted services at the call of a bureaucratic Government while shedding copious tears for Nationalism. The poverty and illiteracy of the masses are heavy drags, even while these facts may serve as convincing arguments for condemnatory propaganda against the existing order. The States and Zemindars, and innumerable caste and sectarian jealousies, pull in favour of the *status quo*. In this entanglement of forces, the possession of an unbroken tradition of loyal service is not a negligible factor."

Mr. Rajagopalachariar proceeds: "Unfortunately, however, Indian Nationalism has so long been in opposition that it seems incapable of realising that it can make honourable use of power and responsibility. Through the wise and effective exercise of political power, Indian Nationalism can make great headway removing fissiparous tendencies and strengthening the economic stamina of the people. Non-violent resistance has been a powerful method of agitation and generation of the spirit. But as a positive means to bring about the transfer of political power to representatives of people composed as we are it has proved inadequate. At the critical point where resistance should end, and persuasion and formative compromise be requisitioned so as to save and fix the moral gains, there is a gap, and all that has been achieved melts into mere history. Ours is not a condition in which anarchy could automatically crystallise into ordered self-government. This is forgotten by those who have nobly suffered. If people who have perceived the truth in their minds can openly confess this distasteful fact, and act according to their conviction, it would bring a remarkable change in the political situation. We have achieved great things through the sanction of Non-co-operation, but we must now follow other plans in order to consolidate our achievements. It is not weakness that we realise that Britain, with its dependence on the other democracies of the world, cannot deny the fundamental right of India to rule herself, and we should act on this realisation. We have reached the stage when we should 'stoop to conquer,' and should redouble our persuasive tactics. We cannot succeed by drifting from non-Co-operation with Britain to non-Co-operation with the whole world."

Mr. Rajagopalachariar then discusses the details of the Cripps proposals, and observes: "The negotiations over the Cripps proposals broke down over interim arrangements for the war period. It is not possible to improve upon the precision and completeness of the declaration contained in the proposals, that the object of the plan is 'the creation of a new Indian union, which shall constitute a Dominion associated with the United Kingdom and other Dominions

by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its domestic or external affairs.' The wording and minor particulars of the Cripps proposals might, perhaps, be improved, but the British Government could not offer a more radical scheme than that embodied in the Cripps plans. Nor is it possible to see what further we could have asked of the British Constitutional lawyers to which they could agree."

Replying to criticisms in Hindu circles of the right of non-accession conceded to the Provinces and Indian States, Mr. Rajagopalachariar says: "In the face of the demand made on behalf of the Muslim areas, it is difficult to see how this treatment of the issue could have been avoided on the occasion of a plan for the final settlement. Ruling out coercion, as we must, we cannot object to the Cripps plan for the initial coming together of representatives with the fullest freedom of decision. The re-demarcation of British Provinces is not ruled out if objection is taken to the present delimitations. If in the Constituent Assembly we could not persuade one another, and decide on a united Central Government, it is surely better for the growth of freedom and democracy in this vast country that those who insist on a separate existence should be allowed to try it. Why, even if five or six Provinces, like Madras, Bombay, Bihar, United Provinces, Central Provinces and Orissa, decide to unite and start a Union, it would be second to none in the whole world, and the law of political gravity would inevitably bring others into its fold, provided the Union had patience and good-will."

Discussing the Cripps proposals for the future status of India, Mr. Rajagopalachariar says: "Time and circumstances have contributed to the recedence of the interim proposals into unimportance. There should, however, be no hesitation in accepting the Cripps plan for making the future Constitution as being the only practical plan for the reconciliation of all the forces in play in India. If, even now, public opinion in the country makes it clear that this solution offered by Britain is acceptable, that the restoration of the existing Constitution in the Provinces, where it is now suspended, would be welcome, and that it will not mean any obstruction to the Allied war effort, but, on the contrary, a strengthening thereof, it may be possible to resume popular control in the Governments of the Provinces, and effect the release of all leaders now under detention without charge or trial."

Proceeding, Mr. Rajagopalachariar observes: "It should not be forgotten that, though Mr. Churchill may hold the whip hand to-day, he is not just a Dictator. When it is clear that the Indian people are agreeable to a reasonable settlement, it will reduce the risk which Britain would have to take, and which those in power paint in a deep colour for the people of Britain, and it will attract the effective support of the better-class politicians in Britain and America. The recent successes achieved by the Allies make such trust easier. Apart from

all this, the Indian people should not hesitate to do what is right and reasonable at the present moment for fear that such action may not be attended by success. It cannot be misunderstood as surrender, and it does not matter if it is so called, provided it is really good for India. With the end of the war in sight, the Indian people will save themselves many precious post-war years if they declare their whole-hearted acceptance of the Cripps plan for a Constituent Assembly on the basis of complete self-government for India."

Concluding, Mr. Rajagopalachariar says: "The long range, no less than the immediate issues like food and clothing, demand a National stock-taking. It is certain that a new order will be forced upon the world, perhaps not so rosy as Allied propagandists may paint, but not so dark as we may imagine in our gloom. India, too, must share in that new order. But this share will be brighter and more glorious to the extent that the best and noblest Indians take a willing share in making the destiny of their country. In 1919, and again in 1930, we refused our co-operation in making a Constitution, and, though this refusal might have helped to vindicate Nationalist self-respect, it did not help in a positive way, and left the constructive work to the reactionary elements. It would be sad if the mistake should be repeated for the third time."

162

Government of India, External Affairs [? Food] Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 159

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *6 October 1943, 4.10 am*
Received: 6 October, 3.30 am

8442. Addressed Secretary of State for India repeated to Private Secretary to the Viceroy.

Your telegram 22189[1] dated September 28th. You will have received separately draft announcement[2] regarding imports as at present arranged. While we are most grateful for allocation which has been made, we (? find) it impossible to announce either total amount or composition of shipments lest effect should be to weaken public confidence and strengthen hands [? of] speculative stock holders particularly of wheat. The lowest figure which we have ever admitted as having propaganda value so long ago as last July[3] was (? 300)000 tons. Since then not only has situation become more critical in eyes of public but Food Grains Policy Committee Report has put forward

[1] Giving details of how the 200,000 tons of food imports to be supplied to India were to be made up. L/E/8/3322: ff 175–6.

[2] In tel. 487–S.C. of 5 October. *Ibid*: f 158.

[3] See No. 38 where the figure asked for was 500,000 tons.

much higher figures[4] as being minimum necessary to enable Government to establish and maintain control of situation. The Committee's recommendations form a connected plan, of which building up of a central reserve with a minimum figure of 500,000 tons is an integral part. They also recommend importation [? of] infinitely larger amounts and their recommendation in this behalf has attracted, as it was (? bound) to do, public attention all over India. We fully appreciate difficulty which confronts His Majesty's Government, but we regard importation at earliest moment of 500,000 tons as an absolute necessity. We most earnestly press that His Majesty's Government will accept latter figure as minimum contribution necessary for effective implementation of our long term management (sic.? policy).

[4] See No. 132.

163

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 442

L/PO/6/108a: f 40

Indian Policy

NOTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE

10 DOWNING STREET, S.W.1, *6 October 1943*

I circulate to my colleagues a letter I have received from Lord Croft, which seems to me to deserve consideration.

W. S. C.

Enclosure to No. 163

WAR OFFICE, WHITEHALL, S.W.1, *1 October 1943*

* * *[1]

Only on very rare occasions have I obtruded my views upon you and I hope you will forgive my offering this opinion on India.

I think that our attitude over the Gandhi fast was amply vindicated and that had we taken any weaker course the very satisfactory drop in political temperature in India would not have resulted.

It may be that when the Viceroy takes over an opportunity to reopen the question of Indians getting together to consult upon an agreed plan for the future may be considered appropriate, or, at any rate, a reaffirmation that the British offer stands. If that is so, I feel that it is of the utmost importance that Gandhi should not be resurrected.

Over the whole issue of Japan involving the life of India Gandhi took the wrong turning, and any attempt to "appease" him would be misunderstood in

this country and would, I imagine, cause the utmost confusion in the minds of the 2,000,000 volunteers in India who are preparing to fight the Japanese.

Providence has aided us in the discredit of Gandhi and all his efforts to cause chaos and confusion in India on the eve of her trial have failed. To bring Gandhi back into the picture now would surely weaken the British Government in the eyes of all who have stood by us, and I should have thought greatly harden Moslem feeling against co-operation and also bring us into contempt in the eyes of the Ruling Princes.

The failure of Gandhi to rouse India against the King-Emperor is one of the happiest events of the war.

To bring him into the picture again in any form would appear to me to be asking for trouble and restore his power for mischief. We might just as well invite Laval to co-operate with us for the defence of France!

* * * * * *[2]

HENRY CROFT

[1 and 2] These asterisks are reproduced from the War Cabinet Paper.

164

Speeches at the Farewell Dinner held on 6 October 1943 in honour of Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/PO/8/9e: ff 9–11, 14–16

THE PRIME MINISTER (RT. HON. WINSTON CHURCHILL): . . . . I have to be very careful in what I say about India because my views on that subject are no more fashionable than were my views on the dangers we encountered before the war from the re-armament of Germany. I pick my steps with reasonable caution, but I must say that I am in a state of subdued resentment about the way in which the world has failed to recognise the great achievements of Britain in India (Hear, Hear). When we look back over the course of years we see one part of the world's surface where there has been no war for three generations. If you wanted to find the part of the world's surface where the fewest number of people have died by steel or lead, you would find it in this great area inhabited by the 400 millions of India. When every continent and country in the world has been rent by war—America torn by civil war, Europe ravaged again and again, Africa torn, China in anarchy and civil war and then subjected to invasion—here in India, under the British flag and under the shield of the King-Emperor, this great calm area, this teeming people have not suffered the evils which have been almost the common and universal lot of man—a marvellous event. And with it has come this broad Justice, Courts

which have no taint of party or creed or bias of any kind, but to which the richest and the poorest man can have recourse with the certainty that his case can be carried forward—as many of the poorest villagers' cases have been carried forward—to the supreme god, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

Famines have passed away—until the horrors of war and the dislocations of war have given us a taste of them again—and pestilence has gone; vast works of construction have enabled shortages in one part of the country to be equalised by the plenty in another, and disease has diminished—with what results; with the incredible result, not by any means necessarily a satisfactory result or a beneficial result but with the incredible result, that in ten years the population of India, under the blighting rule of Britain (Laughter), has increased by 50 million – 50 million.

What causes me so much vexation and sorrow is that these great achievements are not understood. It was thought in many parts of the world that all we did was to sit on the top of India exploiting the poor unfortunate people and taking away their hard-earned sustenance in order to enrich ourselves. I hope we shall find in the future that [there is] a truer recognition of what we have done. I hope we shall find a greater confidence on the part of Britons of all classes and parties in setting forth the work which we have done. If the day should come, as I pray it may not, when we cast down for ever our responsibilities there, and vanish from the scene, this episode in Indian history will surely become the Golden Age as time passes, when the British gave them peace and order, and there was justice for the poor, and all men were shielded from outside dangers. The Golden Age. And I trust we may claim the work we have done, the great work we have done, standing alone for a whole year under this storm; and we ought to be proud of the work we have done in India, as we are of the contribution which we have made, the great contribution which we have made, to the salvation and freedom of the whole world (Hear, Hear).

We send out to India in this time of crisis one of our foremost citizens and one of our greatest soldiers (Hear, Hear), a man of the highest courage, of very wide culture, a man who, although professionalised in the duties of the officer and of the Commander, has nevertheless a wide field of learning, of reading, and is, as I say, capable of wielding the pen with almost equal effect to the way in which he wields the sword. We send out our best, and we wish him every conceivable good fortune (Hear, Hear). We trust that his tenure of office will be crowned with success, that it will be marked by a steady advance in the material well-being of the masses of the Indian people, that it will be marked by an abatement of caste and of sectional bitterness, that it will be marked by an increasing recognition of the part which this small island and its vigilant Parliament play in the progress of India; we trust that

his tenure may be long, and that when he returns he will return to a land victorious and at peace, and from a land to which he will have given both peace and prosperity. Lord Wavell. (Applause).[1]

FIELD MARSHAL THE VISCOUNT WAVELL: . . I should like to say that I have had three difficult but most extraordinarily interesting years under a remarkable war leader, and I here give thanks for them (Hear, hear).

India will be just as difficult, if not more so, just as interesting in a different medium, and just as important I think for the future of our Commonwealth and for the peace of the world. During these months that I have been at home I think I have felt that there is in this country, and indeed I think throughout the United Nations possibly, a greater goodwill towards India than ever before, and a general desire to see Indians managing their own affairs. I think perhaps it is not so generally realised to what a great extent they already do so (Hear, Hear). If it is, as the French proverb says, the first step that counts, we took that first step a good many years ago when we set out to climb the mountain at the top of which lies our goal of a self-governing India, and considering the length and steepness of the ascent I think we have not made bad progress so far. At present, although the summit is getting almost in sight, we are faced by very difficult ground, and considerable peril, but I am sure we must try to surmount those obstacles, and I believe that we can (Hear, Hear). We must firstly be quite clear in our own minds that our aim is the summit, the goal of a self-governing India, and that any slowness in climbing is not due to a reluctance to part with power or a desire to maintain personal advantage or even dislike of change, but simply because when one approaches the summit of a very difficult mountain guides have to be doubly careful in choosing footholds and handholds, and in cutting steps in slippery ice. The Secretary of State for India will pardon me, I hope, if my mountaineering metaphors are inaccurate (Laughter).

[1] In a letter of 7 October Mr Turnbull passed on to Mr Martin some amendments which Mr Amery, with probable Indian reactions in mind, hoped Mr Churchill would agree to make in the text of his speech before it was published. Those relating to the extract here reproduced were:

a. The revision of the sentence in the third para. beginning 'If the day should come' to read: 'As time passes this episode in Indian history will surely become the golden age with the British Government for peace and order, etc.' Alternatively, but less satisfactorily, the omission from the sentence of the words 'as I pray it may not' and 'cast down for ever our responsibilities there, and'. Mr Amery considered that the sentence as it stood would be taken as being in conflict with the undertakings given at the time of the Cripps Mission and reaffirmed by Mr Churchill himself on 10 September 1942 (*Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 383, col. 302).
b. The omission of the opening words up to and including 'with reasonable caution, but'.
c. The omission from the last para. of the words 'of caste and', which might be regarded in India as expressing a desire for the abolition of the caste system.

A note on the file copy of Mr Turnbull's letter states that Mr Churchill decided that the speeches should not be published. L/PO/8/9e: ff 3–4.

It is, I know, said in some quarters that political progress in India during the war should not be attempted but must await the issue of the war. Well, obviously, our first aim must be to defeat the enemy, and everything else must be subordinated to that, but I do not think that that should necessarily bar political progress if progress is possible. The first essential of government in any country is that you should be able to maintain law and order with the consent of the great majority of the people, and I think events in India a year ago proved that the present Government of India is capable of doing so (Hear, Hear), but that does not necessarily mean that it is the only or even the best possible Government. I think we must not even make efficiency the only criterion. "Your good and my good", said Feisal the Emperor, afterwards King of Iraq, "perhaps they are different. Neither false god nor false evil [*sic*] will make a people cry out with pain", so we must be careful in these last difficult stages of the ascent, and yet I feel that we must be prepared to take risks if necessary, and possibly to resort to unorthodox mountaineering methods if necessary. We cannot stay too long at the heights we have reached, and we cannot with safety or with honour go back. Our guides must reconnoitre carefully, test the footholds and make certain that the steps are cut so that the whole party will not slip to ruin. We are roped together on this climb, and we cannot fall singly. Finally, I think that we must have in our minds always the hope of the vision that may await us at the top, the prospect of an India at peace within herself, a partner in our great Commonwealth of Nations, mother of a prosperous people, a shield for peace in the East, a busy market [?for] trade, and yet with sufficient leisure to develop art and poetry and thought, the real mainsprings of life to which India has already contributed much to the world, a far-distant vision, and I believe and hope not unattainable, and one to which I feel we must look forward. (Hear Hear).

Thank you, Sir, and everyone for your kind send-off to Lady Wavell and myself, and we will certainly do our best to justify the trust you have reposed in us (Applause).

165

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 445

L/PO/6/108a: f 38

Indian Policy

MEMORANDUM BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE

10 DOWNING STREET, S.W.1, *6 October 1943*

1. Since the Cripps' offer was made in March 1942, important events have occurred. The Japanese menace of invasion of India came to a head. Gandhi

did his utmost to weaken the defence of the country and to hamper the British Government. He raised the cry of "Quit India!" and made it clear that he was prepared to co-operate with Japan. In all this he was supported by the Congress machine. Not content with exposing India to the frightful disaster of an unresisted Japanese invasion, he and the Congress raised a serious rebellion in the form of Civil Disobedience, causing some loss of life and hindrance to the war effort.

2. However, the successful progress of the war against Japan has removed the danger of invasion for the time being, and the improvement in our affairs in Europe has further weakened the position of Japan. India has therefore been spared the horrors of Japanese subjugation. The measures taken against the Congress leaders restored internal order. They are now confined under easy conditions but without any immediate power to hamper our defence. Their action in this crisis has greatly discredited them, not only in India but among the Allies and particularly the United States where, except for the Clare Luce movement, there is no demand for further British surrenders of executive power at this time. Gandhi's attempt by pretending to fast unto death to intimidate the Government of India into submission being firmly faced, brought further ridicule upon him. In all my visits to America, I have never been asked a single question about India.

3. We are now preparing very important offensive operations from India against Japan for the campaign of 1944, and large British and American resources are being employed. There could hardly be a less suitable time for raising again the political agitation on its old and well-known lines, and for trying to form a responsible Government based in the main on Gandhi. If such a course is adopted, we must expect a grave renewal of agitation throughout India, the future of every race, class, creed and party being thrown into the melting-pot at a time when there is a serious food shortage in some Provinces, and when we have an enormously swollen Indian Army of a very much lower quality than we have ever seen before. It would seem that the injury to our war effort and discipline and to the internal peace of India might be most grievous.

4. The fact that a new Viceroy is going out to India affords no reason for running such risks. If they have to be run, it should be upon broad and solid grounds of public policy and not at a time fixed by the movements of an individual. On the contrary, it might be thought that the Viceroy would do well to establish himself in his new responsibilities, and that this would be a matter at any rate of several months and not merely of weeks. If in say six months' or a year's time we received from Lord Wavell the advice that he felt unable to maintain conditions in India satisfactory to the military operations against Japan without negotiating with Mr Gandhi and the Congress, a very

grave issue would arise which we should have to consider on its merits. We should also probably by then be in a stronger position in Europe through the progress of our arms, and the offensive against Japan from India would be launched and might bring us successes. It would therefore be a very serious step to jeopardize the situation by ourselves opening the whole constitutional issue at this juncture, and I trust my colleagues will most carefully weigh all the issues, some of which may be fundamental, before taking a plunge of this character. We shall certainly not be in a worse position to deal with the constitutional position in India after we have beaten Germany and Japan, and have revived the prestige of our arms in Burma and Malaya, than we are at the present time, when we ought to devote ourselves wholeheartedly to the prosecution of the war. Victory is the best foundation for great constitutional departures.

W. S. C.

166

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/E/8/3318: ff 34–5

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *7 October 1943, 11.30 am*
Received: 8 October

22964. I expect to make another statement in Parliament next week on food. I have in mind something on the lines "What Bengal is doing for herself, what Central Government is doing for Bengal, and what H.M.G. are doing for India". I shall welcome anything you have to suggest. New material will probably emerge from Rutherford's appreciation[1] when I get it. Meanwhile I find it difficult to judge of attitude to be adopted towards Bengal Government past and present. I propose to treat Gregory Report[2] as unsuitable for comment having regard to your pending conference.[3] What would you like me to say about death roll if I am asked?

2. To be of full value suggestions should reach me by the morning of Monday 11th.

[1] No. 158. [2] See No. 123, note 1. [3] See No. 156, para. 19.

167

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Gandhi

MSS. EUR. F. 125/154, file 103

PERSONAL SIMLA, *7 October 1943*

Dear Mr Gandhi,

I have received your letter of 27th September.[1] I am indeed sorry that your feelings about any deeds or words of mine should be as you describe. But I must be allowed, as gently as I may, to make plain to you that I am quite unable to accept your interpretation of the events in question.

2. As for the corrective virtues of time and reflection, evidently these are ubiquitous in their operation, and wisely to be rejected by no man.

Yours sincerely,

LINLITHGOW

[1] No. 145.

168

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 136th Conclusions

L/PO/6/108a: ff 43–5

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on 7 October 1943 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Viscount Halifax

Also present were: Field Marshal Smuts, Field Marshal Viscount Wavell, Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr Brendan Bracken

INDIA

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 71st Conclusions, Minute 2)[1]

The War Cabinet had before them the following Memoranda:—

W.P. (43) 435[2] by the Secretary of State for India, indicating the lines on which the Viceroy Designate wished to deal with the political deadlock in India.

W.P. (43) 436[3] by the Lord President of the Council, giving the views of the Cabinet Committee on India; to which was attached a Note of Dissent by the Secretary of State for War.

[1] Vol. III, No. 718. [2] See No. 160, note 4. [3] No. 160.

W.P. (43) 441[4] by the Secretary of State for India, covering a summary of a recent press article by Mr. Rajagopalachariar.

W.P. (43) 442[5] by the Prime Minister, covering an extract from a letter from Lord Croft.

W.P. (43) 445[6] by the Prime Minister, indicating his views on the proposals of the Viceroy Designate.

The essence of the proposition put forward by the Viceroy Designate was that an attempt to bring leaders of the Indian political parties into the Viceroy's Executive Council, although involving many short-term dangers, was the only course likely to facilitate the post-war solution of the Indian constitutional problem. If this general conclusion were approved by the War Cabinet, the Viceroy Designate proposed that if, after studying the situation and taking advice in India, he formed the opinion that there was a reasonable chance that such an approach would be successful, he should ask the War Cabinet to authorise him to invite a small number of the leaders of the Indian political parties to a private discussion among themselves, with a view to the inclusion of some representatives of these parties in his Executive Council. The leaders would first be asked to give a number of assurances, e.g. that they would lend their whole-hearted support to the war effort, and would work together towards a solution of the constitutional problem. They would also be required to accept the position that, for the period of hostilities, the Executive Council must remain subject to the ultimate control of His Majesty's Government and Parliament exercised through the present statutory powers of the Governor-General.

The Viceroy Designate would not invite the Indian leaders to participate in such discussions without asking the specific approval of the War Cabinet, both for the timing of the approach and for the precise terms of the invitation.

Annexed to the Memorandum was the draft of a statement on the political situation which might be made by the Viceroy Designate soon after his arrival in India (Annexure "A"), and the draft of a Directive indicating the lines on which an approach might be made to the Indian political leaders (Annexure "B").

This proposal had the support of the Secretary of State for India, and of the India Committee, with the exception of the Secretary of State for War, whose views were set out in a Note of Dissent annexed to W.P. (43) 436.

The Prime Minister's Memorandum (W.P. (43) 445) summarised the risks which attended the course proposed.

The Viceroy Designate and members of the India Committee made statements in amplification of the memoranda submitted to the War Cabinet in support of the course proposed.

The following were among the main points raised in the course of the subsequent discussion:—

It was generally accepted that it would be a mistake to assume that in no circumstances could any further advance be made during the war towards a solution of the constitutional problem in India. There was certainly no question of the Viceroy making a public declaration to that effect.

On the other hand, doubts were expressed regarding the expediency of the course recommended by the Viceroy Designate. In particular:—

(*a*) It was felt that the concluding words of the draft statement set out in Annexure "A" of W.P. (43) 435 went too far. A formal statement that the new Viceroy intended, "with the approval of His Majesty's Government, to examine whether a fresh attempt would appear to have good prospects of success" would be taken to imply a decision to reopen at once negotiations on the constitutional issue. If the Viceroy made such a statement soon after his arrival in India, it was likely that public controversy over the constitutional position would break out afresh before he had had any opportunity to study the situation and to obtain advice upon it. Nor would controversy be confined to India. It would be bound to spread to this country and to the United States; and an atmosphere of public discussion might well be created in which it would be impracticable to make any further progress in the matter.

If a statement on the lines of Annexure "A" was to be made, the concluding words ought, at least, to be amended so as to read: ". . . . but I am, of course, free to examine whether a fresh attempt would appear to have good prospects of success."

(*b*) It was the view of the War Cabinet that it was in practice improbable that the Indian leaders, particularly the Congress leaders, would find it possible to give the assurances suggested in Annexure "B" to W.P. (43) 435, and when the conditions became known this might have an unfavourable effect on world opinion.

(*c*) Gandhi, in particular, would almost certainly ask for elucidations and would seek to involve the Viceroy in an argument which might put the latter in a difficult position.

(*d*) Difficulty would also arise as regards the Congress leaders at present under detention. Thus, Gandhi would no doubt claim that he could not decide how to answer this invitation until he had been released; and it might be difficult to avoid having to release him before he had first disavowed all intention of renewing civil disobedience.

(*e*) There was much to be said in favour of leaving the initiative, as it now remained, with the leaders of the Indian political parties. If, of their own initiative, they professed a genuine change of heart and expressed a desire to resume discussions of the constitutional problem, His Majesty's

[4] No. 161. [5] No. 163. [6] No. 165.

Government would be in a far stronger position to secure a fruitful discussion, and there would be much less risk of arousing controversy either within India or outside it.

(*f*) It was suggested that the Viceroy would be ill-advised, at the outset of his term of office, to lay too great emphasis on the constitutional problem. Would it not be better that the new Viceroy should place in the forefront of his programme the preparations for offensive operations against the Japanese, the regulation of food supplies and the relief of famine conditions, and a sound policy in the development of social legislation and the improvement of the social condition of the Indian population?

The conclusions of the War Cabinet were as follows:—

(1) While it was, of course, open to the Viceroy at any time to submit recommendations to the War Cabinet if he thought that the moment was opportune for taking some further step which would assist a solution of the constitutional problem, it was doubtful whether any advantage was to be gained by laying down at this stage too precise and definite a course of action before he had had a further opportunity of studying the political situation on the spot and assessing the prospects of securing further progress.

(2) It would be a mistake at this juncture to remove from the Congress leaders the onus of making a disavowal of their present attitude; moreover as at present advised the War Cabinet were not prepared to embark on a policy of negotiations with Gandhi, which in their view would be attended by grave inconvenience.

(3) The Prime Minister undertook to prepare a Revised draft of the Annexures to W.P. (43) 435 in the light of the discussion. These would be communicated to the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy Designate, and thereafter to the War Cabinet. They could, if necessary, be discussed at the Meeting of the War Cabinet on the following day.

169

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMPORTANT
PERSONAL

SIMLA, *8 October 1943, 9.10 am*[1]
Received: 8 October 11 am

No. 531–S.C. Food position. The Punjab Ministry, under considerable pressure from me, applied through the Governor, have now issued instructions in strong

terms to their Deputy Commissioners to the effect that they should do everything in their power both by propaganda and by executive means to increase the amount of foodgrains available for export. If Deputy Commissioners are kept up to the mark, as I think they will be, this action should have a considerable effect especially as it is being synchronised with the announcement about imports. You will however realise that such steps by the Punjab Ministry can be no substitute for a more satisfactory measure of imports which everyone here continues to consider essential.

[1] MSS. EUR. F. 125/25 has 7 October. The dates and times of despatch and receipt given here are taken from L/E/8/3297.

170

Mr Turnbull to Sir E. Bridges

L/PO/6/108a: f 36

INDIA OFFICE, *8 October 1943*

Dear Bridges,

My Secretary of State feels that Conclusion (2) of W.M. (43) 136th Conclusions[1] goes further than the sense of the discussion in the Cabinet, the conclusion of which, he thinks, is correctly stated under (1) and (3) of the conclusions. He does not think that it was decided that it must be a condition precedent of any settlement in which the Congress Party would participate that the *initiative* must be taken by the Congress leaders in making a disavowal of their present attitude or that the participation of Congress, including Gandhi, was ruled out if it were on the basis outlined in W.P. (43) 435[2] and endorsed by the members of the India Committee (other than the Secretary of State for War) in W.P. (43) 463,[3] where it was provided that it should be a preliminary condition of the proposed discussion[s] that there should be a definite promise of whole-hearted support of the war effort by those who participated in them. It is true that this might be regarded as not "removing the onus" of disavowal from the Congress leaders, but that is not clear since the initiative would come from the Viceroy in the shape of the invitation. Moreover the second part of conclusion (2) as at present worded, might well be taken as ruling out the course proposed and endorsed by the majority of the India Committee. There is some difference, if only a fine one, between the proposal to invite the detained Congress leaders with others to a discussion and ask them as a preliminary condition of the fulfilment of the invitation for a positive assurance of support for the war effort, and the requirement that the "onus of disavowal of their present attitude

[1] No. 168. [2] See No. 160, note 4. [3] This should read: W.P. (43) 436; i.e. No. 160.

should be kept upon the Congress leaders". Mr. Amery thinks that the former proposal though not accepted was not ruled out by the War Cabinet in advance, if Lord Wavell should recommend it later, and he would therefore like that made clear in the Minutes. His own view is that conclusion (2) might be omitted, but if not he thinks it should be so worded as to make it clear that the proposal endorsed by the majority of the India Committee was not ruled out.

Yours sincerely,
[F. F. TURNBULL][4]

[4] In a minute of 11 October, Mr Curson informed Mr Amery that Sir E. Bridges had spoken to Mr Churchill who suggested that in line 1 of Conclusion (2) 'at this juncture' should be inserted after 'mistake' and in line 3 'moreover' should be substituted for 'and'. Mr Amery agreed to these amendments. They are incorporated in the text of No. 168. L/PO/6/108a: f 35.

171

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 137th Conclusions, Minute 3

L/PO/6/108a: f 28

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on 8 October 1943 at 11.30 am were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Viscount Halifax

Also present during discussion of item 3 were: Field Marshal Smuts, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Sir Alexander Cadogan

INDIA

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 136th Conclusions)[1]

THE PRIME MINISTER read to the War Cabinet the Revise which he had prepared of Annexure B to W.P. (43) 435.[2]

The War Cabinet:

Expressed general agreement with the terms of this revised draft[3] subject to the opening words of paragraph 2 reading as follows: "The material *and cultural* conditions . . ."

[1] No. 168. [2] See No. 169, note 4.

[3] [Note in original] Circulated as W.P. (43) 450. [i.e. Enclosure to No. 172 with the omission of the amendment noted in these Conclusions and the passage in para. 4: 'the rallying of all sections to full support of the Government in the war effort'].

172

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 450 (Revise)

L/PO/6/108a: f 27

India

NOTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE

10 DOWNING STREET, S.W.1, *8 October 1943*

The attached Directive to the Viceroy Designate has now been approved by the War Cabinet.

W. S. C.

Enclosure to No. 172

Directive to the Viceroy Designate

1. Your first duty is the defence of India from Japanese menace and invasion. Owing to the favourable turn which the affairs of The King-Emperor have taken this duty can best be discharged by ensuring that India is a safe and fertile base from which the British and American offensive can be launched in 1944. Peace, order and a high condition of war-time well-being among the masses of the people constitute the essential foundation of the forward thrust against the enemy.

2. The material and cultural conditions of the many peoples of India will naturally engage your earnest attention. The hard pressures of world-war have for the first time for many years brought conditions of scarcity, verging in some localities into actual famine, upon India. Every effort must be made, even by the diversion of shipping urgently needed for war purposes, to deal with local shortages. But besides this the prevention of the hoarding of grain for a better market and the fair distribution of foodstuffs between town and country are of the utmost consequence. The contrast between wealth and poverty in India, the incidence of corrective taxation and the relations prevailing between land-owner and tenant or labourer, or between factory-owner and employee, require searching re-examination.

3. Every effort should be made by you to assuage the strife between the Hindus and Moslems and to induce them to work together for the common good. No form of democratic Government can flourish in India while so many millions are by their birth excluded from those fundamental rights of equality between man and man, upon which all healthy human societies must stand.

4. The mission of His Majesty's Government in India will best be discharged at this juncture by the defence of its frontiers against the foreign enemy, by

the appeasement of communal differences and the rallying of all sections to full support of the Government in the war effort, and by the maintenance of the best possible standard of living for the largest number of people.

5. The declarations of His Majesty's Government in favour of the establishment of a self-governing India as an integral member of the British Empire and Commonwealth of Nations remain our inflexible policy. You will make, as occasion warrants, any proposals which you consider may achieve that end. You will not be deterred from making such proposals by the fact that the war is still proceeding; but you will beware above all things lest the achievement of victory and the ending of the miseries of war should be retarded by undue concentration on political issues while the enemy is at the gate.

W. S. C.

8.10.43.

173

Mr Turnbull to Sir E. Bridges

L/PO/6/108a: ff 20–2

INDIA OFFICE, *8 October 1943*

Dear Bridges,

You asked me by telephone to have prepared a draft of a statement based on the Directive in WP(43)450[1] which the Viceroy-Designate might make soon after his arrival in India.

I enclose a draft which my Secretary of State has seen and approved. Lord Wavell is aware of its substance and thinks it generally suitable, but he would wish to preserve an open mind as to the desirability of making any such statement at all.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Martin.

Yours sincerely,

F. F. TURNBULL

Enclosure to No. 173

DRAFT STATEMENT (TO BE MADE NOT NECESSARILY AT ONCE, BUT AT SOME SUITABLE OCCASION SHORTLY AFTER LORD WAVELL'S ARRIVAL)

The Indian people will expect from a new Viceroy some statement of what he hopes to accomplish during his term of office. That is a peculiarly difficult task for a Viceroy who enters on his duties in the midst of the uncertainties of war.

My first duty is the defence of India from Japanese menace and invasion. Owing to the favourable turn which the affairs of the King Emperor have taken, this duty can best be discharged by ensuring that India is a safe and well-furnished base from which the United Nations' offensive can eventually be launched and maintained. Peace, order and the highest condition of well-being among the masses of the people possible in time of war constitute the essential foundation of the forward thrust against the enemy. The hard pressures of world war have for the first time for many years brought upon India conditions of scarcity, amounting in some localities to actual famine. Every effort is being made, and will continue to be made, even by the diversion of shipping urgently needed for war purposes, to deal with this condition. But it is essential that the Central and Provincial Governments press on with their measures to remedy it—to prevent the hoarding of grain, and to ensure the fair distribution of foodstuffs between town and country and the actual rationing of foodstuffs in the larger cities.

On the question of political development, I can only ask the Indian people to have patience. The declarations of His Majesty's Government in favour of the establishment of a fully self-governing India as an integral member of the British Commonwealth of Nations stand as an inflexible policy. But whether it will be possible to make any advance towards that goal during the war depends upon the attitude of the Indian leaders themselves, and I can only say now that what I find I might do to promote better understanding between the Communities and induce them to work together for the common good of India, I will do. But my first aim must be the successful defence of India's frontiers, and nothing must be permitted to interfere with the achievement of victory and the ending of the miseries of war.[2]

[1] No. 172.

[2] Mr Martin replied on 12 October enclosing a copy of the draft statement as amended by Mr Churchill and asking Mr Turnbull to arrange for its communication to Lord Wavell. The amended version differed from this enclosure in unimportant respects except that 'famine' in the second para. reads 'food-shortage'; the first sentence of the third para. begins: 'On the question of political development, I affirm that the declarations of His Majesty's Government . . .'; and the concluding sentence reads: 'But my first aim in this crisis must be the successful defence of India's frontiers and the warding-off of the ravages of war from the people, and nothing must be permitted to interfere with the achievement of victory and the ending of this present dangerous ordeal.' L/PO/6/108a: ff 17–19.

174

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *10 October 1943, 4 pm*[1]
Received: 10 October, 4 pm

No. 2169–S. Following telegram No. 173 of 5th October from Governor of Bengal is repeated:—

Begins. 1. Reference paragraphs 7 and 8 of my letter of October 2nd.[2] I have since had a useful discussion with Ispahani.[3] He says my estimate of 655,000 tons as shortage is too low and suggests one million tons, as large quantities of carry-over from 1941–42 harvest were exported in 1942, while there was much more subsistence consumption, and that Agricultural Department's estimate of 3,193,000 tons for this year's *aus* crop is excessive and that in many areas according to his agents' report it was only a 6-anna crop. He puts probable output at 2 million tons which actually would be just enough for 3 months if we could get it distributed over Province. It is however all in small quantities and he agrees that cultivator will not part till he is assured of *aman* crop.

2. & 3. ⋆ ⋆ ⋆ ⋆ ⋆[4]

4. Ispahani[5] has bought recently a few thousand maunds of rice in Calcutta market for Government at control price of Rs. 20 which I hope is an indication of a break coming. Arrangements for 400 more shops to sell rice at control retail rate have been made. *Ends.*

[1] MSS. EUR. F. 125/25 has 9 October. The dates and times of despatch and receipt given here are taken from L/E/8/3297.
[2] No. 158. [3] 'Ispahani' deciphered as 'I.S.O.'
[4] These asterisks are reproduced from MSS. EUR. F. 125/25.
[5] 'Ispahani' deciphered as 'I.S.O. I.'

175

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *10 October 1943, 9.15 pm*
Received: 10 October, 8 pm

No. 2173–S. Your telegram No. 22964,[1] October 7th. Food situation. As further general comment, I think it will be worth while to emphasise: (1) that

largely owing to efforts of Government, areas of serious distress are confined to certain districts (not whole) of Bengal, Travancore, Cochin and certain parts of the Deccan where autumn crop has failed two years in succession. That is not to say situation is not very serious since these areas are important and thickly populated, and high prices are causing distress in many other parts of India, but it is necessary to give some perspective to the picture, (2) that Central Government are in no way passing responsibility to local governments but are in daily contact with areas concerned and have their own officers (Regional Food Commissioners) on the spot to report, advise and convey instructions. They will not hesitate where necessary to use statutory overriding powers, but as executive machinery must be that of Provinces, Government of India must continue as far as possible to work through them. Given the vast administrative problem, far greater in numbers alone than that of the U.K., with difficulties peculiar to India and an absolute deficiency which can only be quickly remedied by imports on a compensatory scale, no easy or rapid solution can be looked for, but all are doing their best. The problem of dealing with famine, whether artificial or natural, in war conditions, is not to be compared with that of peace-time famines.

2. Following is account supplied by Bengal Government of action taken by them.[2] Bengal Government have taken in hand the expansion and reorganisation of their Civil Supplies Department and have appointed a Food and Civil Supplies Commissioner to supervise and co-ordinate all activities in respect of food, its procurement and distribution.

3. In August last instructions were issued for the immediate establishment of an elaborate relief organisation based on the union as its primary unit on lines very similar to those indicated in the Famine Code. More recently a Relief Commissioner has been appointed to supervise and inspect relief arrangements throughout the Province and to advise and assist local officers in these matters. Emphasis has been laid on the importance of affording relief in kind through free kitchens and cheap grain shops in addition to the more ordinary forms of Government relief, namely, gratuitous relief in cash, cash wages for test relief works and agricultural loans in cash for maintenance as well as for agricultural operations.

4. The number of free kitchens established by Government is now 2,678. In addition there are 532 kitchens established and maintained by private charitable organisations and 1,079 kitchens run by charitable organisations which are subsidised by Government. The total number of persons fed at these kitchens is approximately 1,340,000 daily. Exact figures of the number of cheap grain shops already established are not readily available.

[1] No. 166. [2] Decipher begins para. 2 here.

5. From the beginning of the current financial year up to the 2nd of October the Bengal Government have spent for Gratuitous Relief Rs. 1,61,50,000, for Test Relief Rs. 1,10,16,000, for Agricultural Loans Rs. 1,76,96,000, making a total of 4,48,62,000. These figures include the cost of relief given in the shape of foodgrains.

6. A scheme for purchasing the marketable surplus of the *aus* or summer rice crop, which is normally not a marketable crop but is principally grown for local consumption, has been in operation since the beginning of September, and coupled with it a scheme of price control based on a descending scale of ceiling prices. In the first month of its operation a total of about 30,000 tons of rice and paddy has been procured at or below the ceiling prices. This quantity is being distributed to deficit areas in the Province in accordance with a pre-arranged programme and is being utilised principally for relief operations in those areas. The scheme will continue in operation for about another two months by which time procurement of the *aman* or winter rice crop is expected to begin.

7. Preparation for the complete rationing of Calcutta and its suburbs and the town of Howrah are in active progress. It is hoped that rationing of this area will be in force before the end of November and will thereafter be extended as rapidly as possible to include the whole of the Calcutta industrial area on both banks of the Hoogly. Distribution in Calcutta is at present made to various priorities according to quotas fixed by Government, and also to public through controlled grain shops where sales are supervised by voluntary workers.

8. In a number of towns throughout the Province, for example, in Dacca, Chittagong and Faridpur, steps have already been taken to control consumption of foodgrains by regulated distribution of limited quantities through controlled shops and cheap grain centres.

9. Generally speaking, the supplies received by the Bengal Government up to the middle of August were inadequate to meet in full their commitments in respect of essential services and essential industrial labour in the Calcutta area and the Raniganj Coalfield Area. After the middle of August the quantities of wheat and wheat products and millets received have substantially increased and during the period September 1st to October 5th the quantity of foodgrains moved by the Government of Bengal to districts in distress totals about 19,000 tons, which was the maximum for which transport could be obtained and compares with an average of 8,000 tons per month over the preceding six months.

10. Programme of distribution to districts in Bengal for October includes 14,000 tons of wheat products direct from the Punjab,[3] 3,000 tons of rice direct

from the Central Provinces[4] and approximately 21,000 tons of foodgrains of all kinds from Calcutta. This programme of distribution makes full use of all available transport facilities both by rail as well as by river within the Province.

11. As for the Central Government maintenance of supplies to Bengal from outside has always been treated as matter of first importance. Deliveries of foodgrains to Bengal since beginning of April on Government account have amounted to 181,000 tons rice, 194,000 tons of other foodgrains, total 375 thousand tons in six months. During September deliveries were accelerated to 72,000 tons. During May when slow rate of deliveries had resulted in exhaustion of Calcutta stocks, statutory removal of inter-provincial restrictions in Eastern Region, i.e. "Free Trade", was decided upon, though reluctantly, and saved the situation for the time being. Free Trade period lasted for two months and precise quantities entering Calcutta on private account are not known but estimated nearly 100 thousand tons. Result was slight fall of prices in Bengal, but rise in surrounding areas. War-time conditions require planned and controlled distribution and free trade period was brought to an end as soon as conditions permitted. During this period important industrial and other priorities were able to build up stocks which are likely to see them through until the next main crop. During September arrivals of foodgrains into Calcutta, by rail and sea, averaged 2,400 tons a day, which may be compared with 1,500 tons a day theoretically required for greater Calcutta alone on a ration basis of one pound per head per day. Present reserves in Calcutta estimated at 60 thousand tons of grains which represent over one month's supply for Calcutta, though part of this is required for relief in districts. Greater part of all supplementary surpluses declared by producing areas has been allocated to Calcutta, as well as greater part of imports from overseas, details of which you are aware of.

12. Other steps taken by Central Government on behalf of Bengal are as follows:—

(*a*) Encouragement of all provinces to assist despatch of foodgrains on behalf of charitable and relief organizations to Bengal.

(*b*) Arrangements made for 80 rail wagons a day to carry foodgrains from north-west India to Calcutta and beyond and no limit on bookings from elsewhere.

(*c*) Extra coastal shipping provided for carriage of grains from west coast.

(*d*) Constant stimulation of Punjab, United Provinces and Central Provinces to improve procurement in order to fill wagons available.

[3] 'from the Punjab' deciphered as 'America Punjab'.
[4] 'from the Central Provinces' deciphered as 'America Central Provinces'.

(*e*) Arrangements being made with Military authorities to relieve Bengal Government of responsibility for feeding labour engaged on military works.

(*f*) Active assistance by Central Government's Regional Food Commissioner in administrative problems of Bengal Government.

(*g*) Loan of Central Government's Rationing Adviser to assist in preparation of Calcutta Rationing Scheme.

13. Measures which Central Government have continually urged on Bengal Government have been as follows:—

(1) Correct estimation of the total crop, district by district.

(2) Creation of efficient purchasing Machinery for maximum production [? procurement] of the crop on behalf of Government.

(3) Canalising available supplies into hands of Government Purchasing Agents and prevention of competitive activities by speculators or hoarders through firm application of Foodgrains Control Order.

(4) Deterrent penalties for profiteering or hoarding, and compulsory acquisition of available stocks over reasonable maximum holding, if necessary.

(5) Co-ordination with Transport Authorities[5] for distribution and direction of supplies and movement by control of transport.

(6) Planned distribution of surpluses in such a manner and at such a price that all persons, whatever their means, are able to obtain their share.

14. As regards your attitude towards Bengal Government, suggest criticism of past failures will be unprofitable. Fazlul Huq Ministry undoubtedly miscalculated resources and was slow to take steps to secure situation within Bengal. Present Government, of which Suhrawardy, Minister of Civil Supplies, is most prominent Member, has shown greater energy, though partly misdirected. Important point is that all concerned appear now to be tackling the problem with energy and determination, though there are signs that full extent of administrative problem involved is not yet fully grasped and that there is a certain amount of feeling on part of Minister that Civil Supplies Commissioner tends to oust his jurisdiction.

15. As regards death-roll, figures are incomplete and unreliable, especially for districts, though there has undoubtedly been a considerable increase of mortality for various causes, directly or indirectly attributed to malnutrition, mostly among professional beggars and landless labour class. In Calcutta mortality reported is about twice the normal for the time of year. Since middle August about 2,000 persons suffering from malnutrition have died in Calcutta hospitals.

[5] 'Co-ordination with Transport Authorities' deciphered as 'Co-ordination with American transport authorities'.

176

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

MOST IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *11 October 1943, 9.5 pm*
Received: 11 October, 7.30 pm

No. 2180–S. I have discussed in detail with Rutherford who has also discussed with Reforms Commissioner question of (*a*) his proposal for an amendment of Section 57: (*b*) alternative proposal which he has now put forward for amendment of Section 52–[1] (*a*) by insertion of words "or economic stability" after the word "tranquillity".

2. As you know I have every sympathy with Rutherford's anxiety to have a slightly freer hand, and I have no doubt whatever that if his Ministers (and also his officials) felt that he was in a position to act a little more on his own some of the difficulties which now confront him would be easier to overcome.

3. Further discussion here with Menon in light of your telegram of 25th September No. 22028[1] leaves me however very clear that in fact we can properly regard Rutherford's special responsibility under Section 52–(1) (*a*) for peace and tranquillity as being legitimately attracted by the state of affairs now in existence in Bengal in relation to the food problem: and I propose therefore if you agree to advise him that he can proceed on that basis. That would enable him to have his own way in matters such as the removal of destitutes from Calcutta over which his Ministers have been most reluctant to co-operate,[2] and would also enable him to have his own way about postings in the Secretariat. Rutherford himself is quite prepared if he is informed that you and I take this view to go ahead and drop the idea of amendment of the Act.

4. Grateful if you would telegraph as early as possible.

[1] No. 140. [2] See Nos. 125 and 151.

177

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: f 31

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

INDIA OFFICE, *12 October 1943, 8.15 pm*
Received: 13 October

23381. Your telegram of 11th October, 2180–S.[1] Question whether his special responsibility under Section 52–(1) (a) is attracted is essentially one for

[1] No. 176.

the Governor to decide, but I should have no hesitation about agreeing with him if Rutherford decides it is so attracted in present conditions in Bengal. His decision is of course final under section 50–(3).

178

The Marquess of Linlithgow to Mr Amery

Telegram, MSS. EUR. F. 125/25

IMMEDIATE
PERSONAL

NEW DELHI, *17 October 1943, 6.55 pm*
Received: 17 October, 7.30 pm

No. 2260–S. I have communicated to Rutherford the substance of my telegram No. 2180–S[1] dated 11th October, and your reply[2] relating to use of Section 52–(1) (*a*). He has now sent a further telegram as follows:—

Begins. In my opinion present situation here though it might develop as such does not constitute grave menace to peace or tranquillity of Bengal or any part thereof, for sufferers are entirely submissive and emergency threatens, not maintenance of law and order, but preservation of public health and economic stability. I should not therefore feel justified in importing into Section 52–(1)(*a*) a meaning alien to its apparent intention and such action on my part might very reasonably be resented by the Ministry. It is for these reasons that I have asked for amendment of that Section and I hoped that I had [made] it clear in Delhi that, if an amendment is refused, I am only prepared to employ Section 52–(1) (*a*) provided Secretary of State gives **a** specific assurance that this Section can be properly applied to the existing emergency. This matter involves a constitutional issue of some importance and I suggest that it might be suitable to consult Secretary of State again. *Ends*.

2. I respect Rutherford's independence of view, and his anxiety to be entirely satisfied as to the soundness of his ground before he moves. And he is of course perfectly entitled to test our minds fully. At the same time, after further discussion with Menon, I am afraid I do not agree with Rutherford's interpretation as regards intention of Section 52–(1) (*a*). You will recollect that the Section was intended to give Governor power of action in any field of provincial administration in order to prevent potential menace to peace and tranquillity. This intention is made clear in paragraph 79 of J[oint] P[arliamentary] C[ommittee] Report where Committee make specific mention of public health as one of the matters which might affect peace and tranquillity. Rutherford himself admits that present situation might develop so as to constitute a threat to the peace and tranquillity of Bengal. This in itself is sufficient warrant for exercise of Governor's special responsibilities to prevent it. Added to this any

weakening of morale at this juncture will constitute accession of strength to the enemy and as such has to be prevented.

3. While it is true that it is for the Governor to decide whether his special responsibility is attracted you and I cannot absolve ourselves of our responsibility in the matter, or allow situation to deteriorate as result of Governor's not using his special responsibility. My impression is that Rutherford is anxious to know exactly where he stands in this matter,[3] and that he is quite certain that he has the Secretary of State and the Viceroy solid behind him. My own disposition would therefore be, subject to your views, to tell him quite definitely that in our judgment his special responsibility under Section 52–(1)(*a*) is attracted by present conditions in Bengal and that he should proceed on that basis and could rely on our fullest support in connection with action taken by him. On that assumption, in the discharge of his special responsibility in question it might be worth adding (I do not think there is any risk of his misunderstanding the position) that is of course for his own information and not for communication to his Ministers.

[1] No. 176. [2] No. 177. [3] 'in this matter' deciphered as 'in maintenance of this'.

179

Mr Amery to the Marquess of Linlithgow

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: f 29

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *18 October 1943, 9.15 pm*
Received: 19 October

23920. Your telegram of the 17th October, 2260–S.[1] Section 52–(1)(*a*). I entirely agree with your paragraph 2 and with what you propose to tell Rutherford. It was not my intention to disclaim share of responsibility and Governor can assuredly count on my support.

[1] No. 178.

180

Sir T. Rutherford (Bengal) to Mr Amery

L/E/8/3311: ff 273–5

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *18 October 1943*

Dear Mr Amery,

Your statement in the House about the number of deaths,[1] which was presumably based on one of my communications to the Viceroy,[2] has been severely

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 392, 14 October 1943, col. 1078. Mr Amery estimated the number of deaths in Bengal, including Calcutta, at a thousand a week but warned that they might be higher.

[2] See No. 158, para. 10.

criticised in some of the papers. My information was based on what information the Secretariat could then give me after allowing for the fact that the death roll in Calcutta would be higher owing to the kind of people trekking into the city and exposure to inclement weather. The number of bodies disposed of by the Police Corpse Disposal Squad and the non-official corpse disposal organisations, to which we are giving grants, was from 1st October to 14th October[3] 5,003. I enclose in original the latest report put up to me by the Bengal Secretariat for the period from 1st August to 11th October to show you what I have to cope with here in regard to information. The Chief Minister has wild stories of 26,000 deaths in one of the Subdivisions of Dacca district, which even the hostile press does not support. The full effects of the shortage are now being felt, and I would put the death roll now at not less than 2,000 a week.

2. I notice that in your recent speech[4] you refer to the Central Publicity Department's shibboleth of *only* 4% total shortage. I think it has not been made sufficiently clear to you what this involves, although the Foodgrains Policy Committee's report[5] does attempt to bring out the disproportionate effect of such a shortage under Indian conditions. It amounts theoretically to nearly 15 days starvation for the whole population of the country to be spread over a year by continued under-nourishment of the whole population. The estimated annual production of 52 million tons of foodgrains only provides 375 lbs of food a year per head for 80% of the population. Many of them, of course, who are in a position to get it eat much more, which leaves less for the poorest classes who are nearly always undernourished. The above will, I hope, give you some idea of the problem we in India have to face owing to the loss of Burma rice. Even allowing for some results from the 'Grow More Food' campaign, the Food Conference's suggestion for large imports, if at all possible, is the only solution.

I trust I have not overstepped the official traditions by drawing your attention to this direct.

3. The situation has improved as regards despatches to the districts of foodgrains as you will see from the detailed letter[6] I have sent to the Viceroy, a copy of which goes to you.

Many thanks for the complimentary references to myself made by you in the House.[7]

Yours sincerely,

T. G. RUTHERFORD

[3] In a further letter to Mr Amery of 19 October, Sir T. Rutherford explained '1st October to 14th October' was a mistype for '1st August to 14th October'. L/E/8/3311: f 272.

[4] At Birmingham on 15 October. [5] See No. 123, note 1.

[6] Of 18 October. L/P&J/5/148.

[7] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 392, 12 October 1943, cols. 712–14.

Enclosure to No. 180

Statement showing the No. of deaths in different districts of Bengal caused directly or indirectly by starvation.

From the 1st August to the 11th October 1943.

District	No. of deaths		Remarks
	As reported in newspapers	As reported by Dist. officers up to date	
Bankura	220	1	
Barisal	160	67	
Birbhum	50	*	
Burdwan	146	*	
Bogra	117	*	
Calcutta	4,318	4,318	
Chittagong	769	*	
Do. H[ill] T[racts]	...	*	
Dacca	3,053	*	
Darjeeling	24	*	
Dinajpur	72	10	
Faridpur	316	*	
Hooghly	9	Nil	
Howrah	35	*	
Jessore	64	27	
Jalpaiguri	40	83	
Khulna	20	19	
Malda	1	Nil	out of this 1,013 are in Contai Sub-division
Midnapore	404	1,226	
Murshidabad	151	*	
Mymensingh	219	75	
Nadia	...	*	
Noakhali	32	*	
Pabna	138	8	
Rajshahi	498	*	
Rangpur	85	*	
Tippera	1,370	*	
24-Parganas	59	*	
Total	12,370(a)	5,834	

* Reports from Collectors, as asked for on 11.9.43, have not yet been received.

(a) The above figures are based on sporadic reports published in newspapers and give no systematic or accurate account of deaths. Though in individual cases newspaper reports may have been exaggerated, it is certain that a very large number of deaths have occurred in out-of-the-way places which have not come to the notice of Government. Attempts are being made to collect more accurate figures from the Registrars of Births & Deaths through the L.S.G. Dept. The actual number of deaths occurring every day would not perhaps be less than 9,000 even if it is assumed that one person in every ten of the 90,000 inhabited villages is dying daily due directly or indirectly to starvation. The actuals may very well be much above these figures.

181

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 232

NEW DELHI, *21 October 1943, 8 pm*
Received: 22 October, 2 am

2313–S. Your telegram No. 33920 (sic? 23920)[1] of October 18th. I have informed Governor of Bengal that you and I agree that section 52–(1) (*a*) can properly be applied in the existing emergency. This will greatly strengthen Rutherford's hand though in a recent letter[2] he said that he could hardly use section 52–(1) (*a*) in order to act in his individual judgment as regards the removal of destitutes from Calcutta, a point mentioned in Linlithgow's telegram No. 2180–S[3] of October 11th. On this point Central Government are considering issuing an Order under Section 1 (? 96) A.[4]

[1] No. 179. [2] Of 18 October. L/P&J/5/148. [3] No. 176.
[4] Sec. 126A was evidently intended.

182

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/E/8/3319: f 128

21 October 1943

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 43/43

Prime Minister

As we are to have a debate on the Indian food position in the week after next I should like, if you have no objection, to circulate a White Paper. I should include in this a speech by the Member of the Viceroy's Council in charge of Food made in August last in which he reviewed the measures taken by the Government of India from the outbreak of war up till then and the difficulties experienced in securing provincial co-operation. I should also include a summary of the report of the Long-Term Food Policy Committee[1] set up by the Government of India and of the decisions taken by the Government of India on the recommendations. I might also include some statistical material showing what has been achieved in moving food grains to the deficit areas. I think that a paper of this kind would help to steady the debate and provide

material for Government speakers. The matter is a highly complex one and not at all easy to deal with fully within the compass even of a full-dress speech.

L. S. AMERY[2]

[1] i.e. the Foodgrains Policy Committee. See No. 123, note 1.

[2] Mr Turnbull noted on 22 October that the Prime Minister approved the suggestion. The White Paper was published under the title *India (Food Situation 1943) Speech by the Food Member of the Governor-General's Council and other Papers* (Cmd. 6479).

183

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *21 October 1943*

Received: 3 November

Here beginneth the first epistle of Leo the apostle to Archie the pro-consul. There will be many more and I shall try as far as possible to write weekly. Naturally a great part of our dealings with each other even on the personal side will be by telegram, and our letters will to that extent be more in the nature of filling gaps than of a connected survey or diary of events. In my case they have always consisted, and will no doubt continue to consist, mainly of a certain amount of thinking aloud on the main topics of the day, supplemented by paragraphs on specific questions, some of them mine, others occasionally suggested by the Office as useful to insert in a letter but hardly worth telegraphing. You will probably have no difficulty in detecting these by internal evidence. I have always assumed that some at any rate of the paragraphs in Linlithgow's letters to me were of the same character. Still, though to some extent hotchpotch and full of gaps, these letters between Secretary of State and Viceroy are, I think, helpful to both of us, and, bound as they eventually are in sumptuous leather bindings, an interesting reminiscence —as Bismarck told Prince Alexander of Battenberg his acceptance of Bulgaria would mean to him afterwards.

2. Your first and most anxious care, I fear, is this disastrous food question. Obviously it is going to be worked up both in India and here for political reasons. All the same, there is a natural and widespread feeling here that somehow or other the ultimate responsibility rests with us and that this country could and should have done more. As to that, you know as well as I do the military preoccupations of the War Cabinet and the difficulty of diverting shipping from the first duty of winning the war. As you will remember, the last War Cabinet decision[1] was that the matter should be reviewed at the end

[1] See No. 139.

of the year. I am not sure that that is not leaving things too late and, if you can manage at an early date to visit Bengal yourself, or, even apart from that, feel that you should weigh in with a strong demand for earlier reconsideration, I hope you will do so. But if the Cabinet are to pay any attention to any such further plea from the Government of India they will have to be convinced that everything has been done within India to extract hoarded supplies and get them to the starving districts.

Already dealt with.
W.

3. As regards Bengal, I am very sorry to hear from the latest telegram[2] that Jack Herbert is worse again, and that the doctors feel that they must operate for his appendicitis in spite of the fact that he has started renewed chronic bleeding. One can only hope that he will pull through somehow. As to his succession[3], I have telegraphed[4] to you wondering what you would think of giving Rutherford the definite appointment for 18 months and leaving the question of a political successor from here to stand over for another year. Rutherford obviously seems to be shaping well and to have courage as well as practical experience, and I dare say, though not a politician, he can handle his Ministry better than a newcomer. I have not put the point to Winston yet pending receipt of your reply, but if you are in favour I expect he will be quite glad to be relieved of the difficulty of an immediate choice. Wakehurst, by the way, is not available. The Dominions Office feel that he cannot be spared from New South Wales.

Already cabled.
W.

4. The more I hear of the working of the Bengal Government, both under Fazlul Huq and of all the intrigues and recriminations since, the more I am convinced with Coupland that the Swiss constitutional system might have a better chance of succeeding in an Indian province than the British. The essence of the Swiss system, of course, is that the Executive is elected, by secret ballot and proportional representation, by the two houses of the Legislature together, and remains independent of the Legislature for the duration of the latter. I believe that could be introduced in an Indian Province with very little change in the law or in the instructions to the Governor. I am not sure, indeed, that, by consent, it might not be introduced off-hand. What I mean is this that the Governor might, if the present Government looks like collapsing, call together political leaders of all parties and tell them that on the strength of the emergency there must be a national Government in Bengal and suggest that if they form such a Government, whether by agreement between the parties or actually on the strength of a secret ballot on the Swiss model, he would not only accept it, but would regard it as having been given a permanent

vote of confidence for the rest of the term of the Legislature and would tell them to conduct the administration without regard to the possibility of an adverse vote. It may be, of course, that the bitterness of faction is such in Bengal today that the men so chosen could not work together, and indeed it would not be easy to fit Fazlul Huq back into a coalition national government. Still, I think the idea might be worth keeping at the back of your mind in case things shaped that way.

Anything in this suggestion?

W.

5. When it comes to constitutional progress at the centre it is clear that in view of the Cabinet's attitude,[5] and indeed of the urgency of other matters, you can do nothing but watch and study the situation for some little time to come. The question that would then present itself to you is whether, the bolder and bigger step being relegated to the background for the moment, you should come to any decision as to the further Indianisation of the existing Executive. I am not sure that even there the atmosphere both in India and here may not be in favour of delay, though I know that would be a great disappointment to Mudaliar. Linlithgow, at any rate, came round very much during the last few months against a further advance and was particularly strong on Twynam succeeding Maxwell in the Home Department.[6] If that is your view, there remains the question of Finance. I don't know that there is anyone in sight in India on the British I.C.S. side, or anyone first-class available here. And, as I have put it to you before, there may be something to be said for having an Indian Finance Member who can persuade his colleagues that any deal which he makes with the Treasury here at the end of the war is one conceived in India's interests and not really worked out in the British interest by one who is hand in glove with Whitehall. If so, it would, I think, have to be a man of broad outlook and authority, like Mudaliar, rather than an Indian financial expert who would probably be regarded with suspicion here as well as in India. Possibly your only solution may be to temporise and keep on Raisman for another year.

We must discuss this soon.

W.

6. There is one bit of advance in status which I have mentioned to you before and to which Edward Halifax came back very strongly in conversation with me the other day. He is very anxious that Bajpai should be made a full Minister and not merely a member of the Ambassador's staff with personal ministerial rank. He has held that view for some time past and Anthony has

[2] 2274–S of 18 October. L/PO/8/31. [3] Sir J. Herbert resigned on 18 October.
[4] 1134 of 19 October. *Ibid.* [5] See Nos. 168 and 171.
[6] See No. 13, para. 19 and No. 53, para. 12.

shared it, but Linlithgow was strongly opposed, being afraid of Delhi becoming the centre of a number of foreign legations. Personally, I should sooner have definite foreign diplomats than roving representatives of Presidents with no clearly defined functions and with an inclination to put their fingers into every pie. In any case, we are, after all, pledged to that sort of thing sooner or later, and it might work better if the foreign diplomats were in Delhi before constitutional changes take place instead of flocking to the new government afterwards. Do turn it over in your mind and if you are prepared to go forward I shall certainly support the proposal at this end.

Already done.

W.

[Para. 7, on Lord Halifax's anxiety that the Govt. of India should help with Sir G. S. Bajpai's expenses, omitted.]

8. I see Linlithgow agreed to the admission to the Chamber of Princes of the Rulers of Phaltan, Kurwai, Kalsia and Talcher. While I have nothing against any of these new recruits, whose qualifications indeed appear unexceptionable, I cannot help feeling that we may have cause to regret the successive enlargements of the Chamber which have occurred in recent years. It seems inevitable that the increase in the number of Rulers accorded membership under Article 2 (*ii*) of the Chamber's Constitution will result in placing its policy to a large extent in the hands of the small States. The Chancellor has to speak for his constituents; and, now that a large proportion of these are quite minor Rulers, he may well be impelled to show recalcitrance to your repeated exhortations to group for administration, to limit Privy Purses and to institute Council government. The big States might have regarded such developments with comparative indifference; not so the small States who now look increasingly to the Standing Committee to protect them against the inroads of Paramountcy. Admittedly the Chamber exercises no powers; its most important function is to be a sounding board to the Crown Representative's annual orations. But it seems to me that the more it tends to become an *omnium gatherum* the smaller will be the chances of inducing it to endorse wholeheartedly a wholehearted policy of absorption and of the tidying up of minor units. And yet that is what we must have sooner or later, in the interests of the Princely order itself!

[Para. 9, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy; and para. 10, on the Indian High Commissionership in South Africa, omitted.]

184

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/190: f 124

PERSONAL INDIA OFFICE, *22 October 1943, 7.20 a.m.*

2420. I have to-day received message through Australian High Commissioner from Evatt saying that his Government have decided to appoint High Commissioner to India and that he assumes India will reciprocate at once by appointment of an outstanding Indian personality and asking for urgent reply.[1] I am sending answer that I am delighted to hear of this decision and am sure it will be welcomed in India but that I suggest that Australian Government telegraph official offer to Governor-General as it is for Government of India to agree to the arrangements and to make reciprocal appointment. Evatt is clearly anxious for an early reply so I am warning you privately to avoid delay.

[1] Mr Evatt's telegram also mentioned that the decision resulted from Mr Amery's suggestion (for which see Vol. II, No. 95, para. 6). L/P&J/8/190: f 128.

185

Secretary of State to Government of India, Food Department

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 129–31

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *22 October 1943, 7.15 pm*

SECRET

24237. Your telegram No. 8442,[1] dated 6th October. I have great sympathy with your disappointment at failure to obtain whole amount of what you regard as minimum shipments for purpose in view. Nevertheless I am convinced that it would be useless to go back to my colleagues so soon and ask (when there has been no substantial new development) for complete reversal of decision reached so recently as 24th September.[2] That decision was arrived at very deliberately in light of all the circumstances. I had very strongly urged course which you desired and had powerful support from memorandum[3] by Chiefs of Staffs.

2. Cabinet decided on 24th September that position should be reviewed again at end of year in light of Indian harvests. I am, however, prepared to bring matter up before War Cabinet again next month when (*a*) we should know reaction on position in India (e.g. by way of bringing out hoards) of

[1] No. 162. [2] No. 139. [3] No. 119.

the arrival of some ships bringing grain from Australia, and (*b*) should have clearer idea whether full programme of Iraq barley will be forthcoming. I might then urge that say 50,000 tons of cereals should be loaded per month in January and February on ground that examination of position at the end of the year would be too late to affect loading in those months. For this purpose I should be glad to have as soon after 1st November as you wish a report on the situation together with any suggested arguments to support above proposal. In particular is it true that interruption of imports while Bengal rice crop is coming forward might prejudice your efforts to secure substantial part of that crop as a reserve?

3. As regards India in general, what is prospect that, as rationing comes into force on larger scale, and as new crop comes forward, you may be able to build up therefrom substantial reserve in Government hands, available against future eventualities?

186

Mr Amery to Sir S. Cripps

L/E/8/2527: f 67

INDIA OFFICE, *22 October 1943*

My dear Cripps,
You will remember that I circulated to the Cabinet as W.P. (43) 150[1] on the 9th April last a memorandum on social and economic policy for India which covered a note[2] by yourself and Bevin in which you put forward suggestions for a more progressive policy in these matters under the new Viceroyalty. I said in my covering memorandum that, while I was sympathetic towards the objects which you and Bevin had in view, I thought that no decisions ought to be reached which would be binding on the new Viceroy until the proposals had been examined by the Indian authorities and considered advice obtained based upon expert opinion.

This paper was not discussed in the Cabinet and no instructions have been issued to the new Viceroy in regard to these matters other than those contained in the Prime Minister's recent directive[3] which are on broad lines. I thought it worth while, however, to send to Linlithgow a copy[4] of your note and my own comments on it, so that they could be examined in India and I asked Linlithgow, if he was able to do so, to let me have his own conclusions on this general topic before he left office.

I recently received the reply[5] from Linlithgow of which I enclose a copy for your information. It is, I think, of a good deal of interest and certainly

touches upon points which will have to be taken account of in any policy for the future. I am not circulating it to the Cabinet generally but I am sending copies to those who have been members of the India Committee[6] and to Bevin.

Yours sincerely,

L. S. AMERY[7]

[1] Vol. III, No. 643. [2] Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 276; see also No. 544, note 2 in that Vol.
[3] Enclosure to No. 172. [4] Vol. III, No. 574. [5] No. 113.
[6] Namely, Mr Attlee, Sir J. Anderson, Lord Simon and Sir J. Grigg.
[7] Sir S. Cripps acknowledged this letter on 25 October saying he would study its enclosure as soon as he had the opportunity. L/E/8/2527.

187

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *25 October 1943*

My first weekly letter will not be a long one but I must write and let you know that we had a most comfortable journey out and that the swearing-in ceremony on the 20th passed off without a hitch. Linlithgow seemed in remarkably good heart after 7½ years but he has certainly earned a rest and probably needs one. He greeted me at the top of the great flight of steps in front of The Viceroy's House as follows:—

"I am glad to see you. I do not think I have ever been so glad to see anyone."

2. It is obviously my first duty to get a grip of the food situation and I am off to Calcutta by air tomorrow morning,[1] returning on Friday.[2] Some preliminary conclusions are forming themselves in my head but I shall not bother you with them at this stage. Aykroyd, the Nutrition Expert, has written a most gloomy report about conditions in the Bengal hospitals, and though experts are sometimes extravagant in their views, I fear the picture is not overdrawn. Whatever else we do we shall certainly have to draft a good deal more medical aid to Bengal and do it immediately.

3. The Bengal Cabinet have passed an ordinance for the control of destitutes. This is highly satisfactory as Rutherford was doubtful whether they would agree to it, and I had already advised him[3] that in spite of his own doubts he should regard his special responsibility under Section 52–(1) (*a*) as attracted,

[1] Lord Wavell had already informed Mr Amery of his forthcoming visit to Calcutta in tel. 2309–S of 21 October, which replied to tel. 1134 of 19 October (see No. 183, para. 3). L/PO/8/31.
[2] 29 October. [3] See No. 181.

which would have meant a Governor's ordinance under Section 89. The passing of this ordinance suggests that the Bengal Government are becoming conscious that not only India but the whole world is looking to them to do something positive and effective and they may now be in a mood to co-operate whole-heartedly in such measures as may seem necessary to save the situation in the Presidency. If they are not it seems to me that we shall have to go ahead without them.

4. I am anxious to see Governors as soon as possible, and have decided to see them all together. I propose to get them here on the 19th November and to discuss food and other subjects, probably including post-war reconstruction. Governors themselves will, I think, welcome a chance to pool their ideas and I shall of course be careful that there is no suggestion that we are making executive decisions which properly appertain to the Provincial Governments or to the Government of India.

5. I have opened a Distress Relief Fund into which will be paid money received from the High Commissioner as the result of your appeal in *The Times* and any other contributions received. I have given publicity to the creation of this Fund, but have not made a direct appeal for money.

6. Mountbatten came to lunch yesterday and was in very good form. The Embassy has reported that his visit to Chungking was a great success both with the Chinese and with the Americans, and in Delhi he has gone down very well. . . .

[The remainder of para. 6, on the American proposal to supply China by air subject to the Assam railways accepting American advice and help; and para. 7, on Lord Wavell's stay in Cairo, omitted.]

188

Mr Gandhi to the Secretary, Government of India, Home Department[1]

L/P&J/8/623: ff 206–8

DETENTION CAMP, *26 October 1943*

Sir,
I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 14th inst.[2] received on 18th instant.

2. Your letter makes it clear that my reply to the charges brought against me in the Government publication *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942–43*[3] has failed in its purpose, namely to convince the Government of my innocence of those charges. Even my good faith is impugned.

3. I observe too that the Government did not desire "comments" upon the charges. Previous pronouncements of the Government on such matters had led me to think otherwise. Be that as it may, your current letter seems to invite an answer.

4. In my opinion, I have, in my letter of 15th July last,[4] unequivocally answered all charges referred to in your letter under reply. I have no regret for what I have done or said in the course of the struggle for India's freedom.

5. As to the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942,[5] apart from my belief that it is not only harmless but good all round, I have no legal power to alter it in any way. That can only be done by the body that passed that resolution i.e. the All India Congress Committee which is no doubt guided by its Working Committee. As the Government are aware, I offered[6] to meet the members of the Working Committee in order to discuss the situation and to know their mind. But my offer was rejected. I had thought and still think that my talk with them might have some value from the Government stand-point. Hence I repeat my offer. But it may have no such value so long as the Government doubt my *bona fides*. As a Satyagrahi however, in spite of the handicap, I must reiterate what I hold to be good and of immediate importance in terms of war effort. But if my offer has no chance of being accepted so long as I retain my present views, and if the Government think that it is only my evil influence that corrupts people, I submit that the members of the Working Committee and other detenus should be discharged. It is unthinkable that when India's millions are suffering from preventable starvation and thousands are dying of it, thousands of men and women should be kept in detention on mere suspicion, when their energy and the expense incurred in keeping them under duress could, at this critical time, be usefully employed in relieving distress. As I have said in my letter of 15th July last, Congressmen abundantly proved their administrative, creative and humanitarian worth at the time of the last terrible flood in Gujarat and equally terrible earthquake in Bihar. The huge place in which I am being detained with a large guard around me, I hold to be waste of public funds. I should be quite content to pass my days in any prison.

6. As to "satisfactory assurances" about my "good conduct" I can only say that I am unaware of any unworthy conduct at any time. I presume that the impression Government have of my conduct is referable to the charges mentioned in the indictment, as I have succinctly called *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942–43*. And since I have not only denied the charges

[1] This letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) pp. 114–15 and in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 290–2.
[2] Not printed. See *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi*, pp. 112–14 and Tendulkar, *op. cit.*, pp. 287–90.
[3] Cmd. 6430. [4] See No. 51, note 1. [5] Vol. II, No. 470. [6] See Vol. III, No. 353.

in toto but on the contrary have ventured to bring counter-charges against the Government, I think that they should agree to refer both to an impartial tribunal. Seeing that a big political organisation and not a mere individual is involved in the charges, I hold that it should be a vital part of the war effort to have the issue decided by a tribunal, if mutual discussion and effort are considered by the Government to be undesirable and/or futile.

7. Whilst your letter rejects my request that my letter of 15th July last should, in fairness to me, be published, you inform me that their decision in this matter however "is without prejudice to the freedom of Government to use at any time and in any manner which they think fit the various admissions contained in the communication which you have voluntarily addressed to them". I can only hope that this does not mean that, as in the case of the *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942–43*, garbled extracts will be published. My request is that my letter should be published in full, if and when the Government think fit to make public use of it.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

189

Government of India, Commerce Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/190: f 122

NEW DELHI, *27 October 1943, 3.25 pm*
Received: 27 [? 28] October, 2 am

9187. Proposal to appoint High Commissioner for Australia in India. Following telegram sent to External Canberra. *Begins*: Your Secret telegram 178[1] dated 22nd October to Foreign New Delhi. Government of India welcome Australian Government's proposal to appoint a High Commissioner for Australia in India. Their agreement is based on assumption that Australian Government will equally welcome appointment of a High Commissioner for India in Australia. *Ends*.

[1] There is no copy of this telegram on L/P&J/8/190.

190

Mr Mudie (Bihar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/178: f 47

SECRET BIHAR GOVERNOR'S CAMP, *27 October 1943*

No. D.-o. 710–G.B.

3. The Communists, as the Chief Secretary's report shows, are trying to increase their influence by infiltration tactics. They have managed to prevent themselves being thrown out of the Kisan Sabha by promising to be good, though it remains to be seen what their promise is worth. In an attempt to organise labour they have joined with the Congress and doubtless they will, for the present at any rate, have to support Congress policy to maintain the union. In this Province many Communists took part in last year's Congress rebellion. Later, although their pamphlets condemned sabotage as dangerous to the defence of the Country, they alleged that the rebellion had been deliberately provoked by Government in order to justify repression and they demanded that Congress leaders should be released to restore order. The party here has been of no assistance in the war effort. Rather the reverse. It has rendered lip-service to anti-fascism while doing what it can to do pro-Congress propaganda by putting the Government always in the wrong even if they do not put the Congress always in the right.

4. In the circumstances my officers were seriously perturbed in the new approach to the C.P.I., proposed in Home Department letter No. 7/15/4–Poll(1)[1] dated the 4th September 1943. They feel that the policy of fraternization suggested there would not lead to any increase in the war effort but would have the exactly opposite effect. It would, in their opinion, definitely lower the morale of the magistracy and the police. The proposed action, too, might lead loyalists to conclude that, although their support of the war would be accepted and possibly rewarded while it lasts, they would be thrown to the wolves as soon as it is over. From all I have seen and read, since I came here, I agree with them. The rebellion was more severe and more prolonged in this Province than probably anywhere in India and the consequent shock to official and loyalist morale was also more severe and lasted longer. It has, in fact, not yet disappeared. I had an instance of that the other day when I saw a letter from a senior police officer openly accusing Government of having failed to establish confidence in its subordinates owing to its policy of appeasement. I do not think that he has any grounds for his accusation, but the fact that it was made shows how the wind is blowing and how dangerous it would be in this Province, at any rate for some to come, to give the impression, by adopting

[1] There is no letter of this number and date on L/P&J/8/681 'Communist Party in India—G/I's Policy towards—Removal of Ban'; but see No. 127.

a policy of appeasement towards the Communists, that Government were weakening its attitude towards the Congress.

191

Mr Dibdin to Mr Turnbull[1]

L/E/8/3311: f 271

INDIA OFFICE, *28 October 1943*

Dear Frank,

I suppose we might use Rutherford's estimated figure[2] of two thousand deaths[3] a week, but I should think it ought only to be given with a great deal of caution and explanation i.e. that it is no more than the best informed guess that can be reached in the present state of our knowledge.

As to para. 2, I think there is a good deal of propaganda for imports going on. Firstly, the figure of 52 million tons of foodgrains does not include quite a substantial amount of the production of the major foodgrains and does not touch at all the pulses, which are a very substantial element in Indian food production. The approximate estimate of overall production of foodgrains and pulses in India is variously given as about 60 million and about 70 million. It is, therefore, pretty misleading to make calculations as Rutherford, as well as others, seeks to do, by taking the whole population of India, British and State, multiplying it by 365 days and then by one pound a day for 80% of the population (which is the normal way of providing for the smaller consumption of the non-adult inhabitants of an area).

The other rather misleading statement is to say that 4% shortage amounts theoretically to fifteen days starvation. The food production of India is never the same from year to year, indeed it varies by as much as 10% or more, and I think it misleading to suggest that the not very good, but far from catastrophic, crop of 1942/43 should, other causes apart, have caused more trouble than the much larger deficiencies of other years.

I do not know if you have read the Foodgrains Committee Report[4] as yet, but it makes a precious thin case for the import of a million tons. The case for the extra half million is largely a matter of prices. It is wanted to defeat the blackmailing efforts of Darling's friends in the Punjab.

Thank you for letting me see the letter.

A[UBREY] D[IBDIN]

[1] This note was apparently prepared in connection with the speech Mr Amery was to make in the debate on the Indian Food situation in the House of Commons on 4 November.

[2] See No. 180.

[3] [Note in original.] 'I think that his figure is for All Bengal *not* for Calcutta only. But it is not wholly clear.'

[4] See No. 123, note 1.

192

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 155

IMMEDIATE *29 October 1943, 11.35 pm*
SECRET
PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

2395–S. Your telegram No. 1149,[1] 23rd October. Bengal Governorship. I saw Rutherford constantly during my Bengal tour. He is a sound administrator, has plenty of common sense, and keeps his head. He is liked and respected by European business community and is I think on good terms with Ministry. But I do not regard him as first class. He did not impress me as feeling, or inspiring in others any sense of, the extreme urgency of the problem. Rutherford's attitude is that he will of course carry on as long as required but unless he is to be made permanent the sooner he gets back to Bihar the better he will be pleased. Civil officers in Bengal are not an outstanding lot and their morale is not high. What Bengal needs is inspiring leadership and drive of first class administrator of wide experience. I recommend that suitable selection be made immediately and that person selected be sent out as soon as possible even though this may be inconvenient to him. There is work to be done of highest importance and interest and if you can sec[ond] first class man who would be interested in dealing with urgent war time situation but not repeat not in serving full term of 5 years I would not object. Immediate object is to get first class man in position. Type of man I have in mind from my military experience is Bernard Freyberg.

[1] Informing him that 29 October was soon enough for a reply on the Bengal Governorship. L/PO/8/31. For previous discussion of candidates for the Governorship of Bengal, see L/PO/8/31. For a summary of Mr Amery's proposal that Sir T. Rutherford should remain in Bengal for a year or more, see No. 183, para. 3.

193

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 125–6

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *29 October 1943, 11.55 pm*
Received: 30 October, 1.30 am

2396–S. Following appreciation of Bengal situation based on tour just ended may be of use to you for general purposes and for debate in Parliament.[1]

[1] On 4 November on Indian food situation.

[1.] Situation is undoubtedly grave. As I will explain accurate information is most difficult to obtain but the main causes appear to be indiscriminate buying of rice in rural districts after the loss of Burma which denuded areas of normal supplies, and natural calamities such as cyclone of last year and the more recent floods. Most rural districts are affected but Midnapore, 24 Parganas, Tippera, Chittagong, Dacca, Faridpur and Mymensingh are said to be the worst. In these districts distress except amongst the well to do class and actual farmers is common and malnutrition has weakened resistance to disease. Bengal being a permanently settled area[2] Land Revenue Organisation, which in other Provinces provides accurate intelligence of the situation in the villages, does not exist, and communications in typical rice growing country being extremely bad District Officers had and (sic? to) gather inadequate information about the extent and severity of distress and about the number and causes of deaths. Large scale relief measures have been (? initiat)ed. Very liberal grants were given to districts affected by natural calamities and at present strenuous efforts are being made to provide cooked food or dry grain to people who cannot fend for themselves.

[2.] In Contai sub-division of Midnapore where I spent the whole day on 27th 312,000 people are said to be receiving cooked food and 38,000 dry grain out of total population of 800,000. But these efforts are hampered by lack of supplies for distribution from Calcutta, difficulty of movement both to and within affected areas and insufficiency of district staffs who are attempting to organise reception stations, relief stocks, hospitals, and kitchens, and (sic) conditions of great difficulty. They are aided by voluntary organisations but bulk of work and responsibility necessarily falls on Government. Net result in Contai is that only one meal a day can be provided at most of the kitchens at the best of times and that kitchens are frequently closed. Subdivisional officer reported that against his requirement of 2,300 maunds food grains daily (corrupt group) never received more than 1,500 maunds on any one day. There is shortage of drugs in Contai and this is serious in view of prevalence of severe form of malaria. No statistics of starvation deaths are available. In village conditions it is impossible to separate normal death rate from death rate due to (*a*) disease aggravated by malnutrition and (*b*) actual starvation. General signs of distress are increase in pettiness of land transactions at registration offices and roadside sale of uten(?s)ils and ornaments. Against all this can be set local opinion that relief measures are beginning to make an impression and that distress is not gaining ground.

3. In Calcutta main problem is that of destitutes from outside which is symptom of widespread rural distress. Governor's Ordinance made on advice from Ministry recently gave Bengal Government special powers to collect destitutes and deal with them in special camps. Nothing has yet been done. I saw myself many hundreds of them lying in the open (? near) kitchens where food is

distributed by day. Death rate is high and (? hospital) arrangements and supply of drugs are inadequate.

4. To sum up the situation is not repeat not in hand and unless it is handled with utmost firmness and expedition it seems to me that capacity of some rural districts to maintain themselves may be impaired for an indefinite period. This opinion is largely guesswork as Ministers immediately concerned whom I saw individually did not seem certain of their information and officials are in much the same position. But we must assume the worst possible situation and plan accordingly.

5. At full meeting of Bengal Ministry with Governor on 28th evening I stressed extreme urgency of the whole problem and secured acceptance of following short term programme: (1) Bengal Ministry is to remove destitutes from Calcutta and if necessary other large towns to camps with proper arrangements for rest, food and (? medical) attention and to return them to their homes when they are fit and (? conditions) justify this course. Destitutes are largely women and children.

(2) Movement control to be established at Calcutta under Major-General with adequate staff to supervise food grains movement throughout the Province. Officer selected is Wakely who is immediately available and has requisite experience. He will work as agent of Bengal Government.

(3) C.-in-C. with whom I discussed problem before leaving New Delhi to use military resources to maximum possible extent to reinforce civil organisation during critical two and a half to 3 months until Aman crop comes in and possibly for longer. This is now definitely a military as well as a charity problem since army must have stable base. C.-in-C. is on tour and I telegraphed to him last night. Preliminary moves are already beginning.

6. I also stressed at meeting with Bengal Government importance of long term plan on the lines of Gregory Committee's Report covering (i) considerable increase in District staffs so as to improve information and control; (ii) measures to improve production; (iii) a sound procurement policy; (iv) adequate arrangements for distribution; and (v) earliest possible rationing of large towns especially Calcutta.

7. We cannot let things drift and unless I see a quick improvement with Army help I shall have to consider further action. Use of Section 93 is difficult. Ministers command substantial majority in Legislature and Governor points out quite rightly that they inherited most intractable problem. Whole business has been overlaid by political animosity and sensational journalism to an extent

[2] The Permanent Settlement, whereby the land revenue payable to Government was fixed in perpetuity instead of being subject to periodic revision, was introduced in Bengal and Bihar in 1793 by Lord Cornwallis.

which makes assessment of Ministry's competence very difficult. But I am clear that attempt to find more competent Ministry would be useless at present.

8. Please impress upon War Cabinet that in my view situation is most serious and that if confidence is to be restored maximum possible imports of food grains against Government of India demand[3] must be arranged.

[3] See No. 162.

194

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/32b: f 35

SECRET *30 October 1943*

18–U. I have been considering suggestion you made in London that you might visit India during Christmas recess. I am advised that such a visit would raise hope of political move and that unless you brought some definite offer result would be more recrimination and disappointment. I fear that this is undoubtedly correct and though I should be delighted to see you I feel I must advise definitely against visit.

195

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/I/1/1102: f 147

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *30 October 1943, 7.30 pm*

Received: 30 October, 5.30 pm

No. 2403–S. Puckle informs me that leading English Dailies are carrying articles on White Paper[1] in which it is suggested that main cause of Bengal trouble is the incompetence of Indian Ministry and lack of public spirit amongst Indians generally. Comment of this kind will have deplorable effect here and will divert Indian criticism into racial channel. Causes of trouble are extremely complex, and in Calcutta I was careful to take the line that recriminations were worse than useless and that all effort must be towards finding a remedy. Can you do anything to tone down anti-Indian comment? I realise (? the) difficulties, but shall be grateful for your help.

[1] See No. 182, note 2.

196

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/31: f 154

INDIA OFFICE, *1 November 1943*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 47/43

Prime Minister

Bengal Governorship

Some days ago I put to Wavell the possibility that Rutherford, the present acting Governor, might be kept on for say 18 months in order to deal with the famine situation and to tone up the administration in Bengal. I enclose a copy of Wavell's reply[1] which shows that he is not in favour of this course. He does, however, strongly urge the necessity of sending out a first-class man who will provide inspiring leadership and drive. He would like a new appointment to be made and the new man to go out as soon as possible.

I still think that the best man we could find would be Dudley and I understand that Anderson shares this view. I would now urge that you should reach a decision as soon as possible. I am, of course, always ready to come over and see you about it at any time.

L. S. A.

[1] No. 192.

197

Memorandum by Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/PO/10/21

SECRET *1 November 1943*

GOVERNORS' MEETING—NOVEMBER 1943

The Food Situation

All Governors will doubtless agree that food is the most important subject before the Central Government and Provincial Governments at the present time. If the war against Japan is not to be prolonged large-scale operations must be mounted from India. But India cannot be a satisfactory base for large-scale operations while her people, or any considerable section of them, are in acute distress. It follows that unless the food situation in Bengal and other distressed areas can be restored, and unless we can so order our policy all over the country as to control prices, maintain supplies and justify public confidence,

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 8 November 1943 from Lord Wavell to Mr Amery.

we may, and probably shall, prolong the war in the East. On this ground alone the whole problem is most pressingly urgent. Upon the humanitarian and administrative aspects I need not dilate.

2. Once we realise that we are acting not on a Provincial, nor on an Indian, but on a world stage we can get the food problem into its proper perspective. The United Nations as a body, particularly the British Commonwealth and the United States, are vitally interested in what we do or omit to do. I have had the advantage of discussions in London with the Ministers concerned. Some of them have difficulty in understanding why India, in view of the fact that she is so nearly self-supporting in peace-time, is having so much trouble with her war-time food economy. This misunderstanding can be, and I hope has been, corrected; but the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of War Transport have problems of their own which cannot be ignored. The Ministry of Food expect a world shortage of cereals, and although the shipping position has improved very greatly the Ministry of War Transport has to consider not merely the tonnage available but its operation as part of the general strategic plan. Thus, though foodgrains may be immediately available in Australia or North America the Ministry of Food may be reluctant to release them, and the Ministry of War Transport may be unable to deliver them to India except by diverting ships and changing loading programmes on a scale sufficient to be most embarrassing. There is no lack of sympathy in Whitehall, but the Ministers concerned are most anxious that our demands upon them should not be increased by any lack of determination or administrative efficiency here. We cannot rely on any change in the near future in this state of affairs. We must be prepared to husband and make the best use of our resources over a period which may extend to the next five years. Nor can we rely on imports to build up the reserves we need to meet emergencies and control prices. It is no longer a question of surplus Provinces giving, as a matter of grace, what they can easily spare, or of deficit Provinces trying to get as much as they can from outside. The total resources of the whole country must be brought to an accurate account and be made available in a common pool.

3. The facts (*a*) that we are involved in a world problem and (*b*) that events in India may have a profound effect on the course of the war, seem to me to lead inevitably to the conclusion that in spite of all the constitutional difficulties we must think of India as a single unit. If surplus Province "A" is not prepared to submit to an austerity régime for the benefit of deficit Province "B", and if, in consequence, we are compelled to call upon His Majesty's Government for help which, if we worked together, we should not need, we are unquestionably failing in our duty. Subject to one proposal which I do not myself like but on which I should value the views of Governors I do not contemplate any constitutional change. What is needed is active personal leadership by the

Governors and by myself; and I believe that, if this leadership is forthcoming, Ministries, where they exist, can be guided into appropriate action.

4. The basic features of any long-term policy appear sufficiently from the Foodgrains Policy Committee's Report,[2] with whose conclusions I am in general agreement. I propose to confine myself to the broad policy aims, as I think it better that we should not be drawn into much detail:—

(*i*) *Information and Statistics.*—The absence of a Land Revenue Staff reaching right down into the villages is at least partly at the bottom of the present trouble in Bengal. Are Governors satisfied that the arrangements for obtaining and digesting rural and urban intelligence in their respective Provinces are adequate and efficient, and that they have the complete and accurate information of stocks which a proper use of the returns prescribed by the Foodgrains Control Order can provide? The objects are *first* that it should be impossible for acute distress to occur without considerable warning; *secondly* that when distress does occur there should be accurate day to day information about its nature and extent; and *thirdly* that statistics should be available as the basis of a planned food economy. Are Governors satisfied that accurate information is supplied regularly to the Centre without which a proper appreciation of the situation and sound planning is impossible? It seems to me that this is a matter upon which each Governor can satisfy himself very quickly if he has not already done so; and that any Governor who is not satisfied should himself take, or press his Ministers to take, suitable action by an increase of staffs or otherwise. I should also like to know the extent to which arrangements have been made with the Police, Excise and Intelligence Services to support enforcement operations.

(*ii*) *Production.*—Conditions vary greatly from Province to Province, but I believe that in some Provinces at least the quickest return is likely to come from an expanded distribution of improved seed. There may be major or minor irrigation schemes which could be carried out quickly. If Governors could call for, and endeavour to get passed, integrated programmes of increased production, and could then see that they are carried out, the result might be very valuable. I have no doubt that much work of this kind is already being done, but the difficulty lies in getting clear-cut decisions and in keeping up to date with execution. I am aware that if output is to be speeded up, the cultivator must be given additional supplies, e.g. of the iron and steel required for agricultural implements. We are making a beginning at the Centre, but it would greatly help us if Governors would indicate how, if additional supplies of such commodities were made available to them, they would propose to see that they really get into the hands of the cultivator.

[2] *Report of the Foodgrains Policy Committee 1943*, Food 2/2600 (Government of India Press, Simla, 1944). See also No. 347, Appendix II.

(*iii*) *Procurement.*—I know that this is a controversial subject. The possibilities seem to me to be:—

(*a*) A Central Foodgrains monopoly, which would buy all foodgrains in excess of the producers' own requirements. The Foodgrains Policy Committee recommended this as the ideal, but recognised the administrative difficulties.
(*b*) Provincial or State Foodgrains monopolies operated as in (*a*). Both for (*a*) and (*b*) Provincial or State machinery would be used; but if (*b*) were adopted the Provincial or States Governments would be principals and not agents.
(*c*) Procurement through the Provinces or States of all foodgrains offering up to the quantities estimated to be required for provincial purposes, for export to deficit Provinces, and for the Defence Services.

Under (*c*)—the method adopted pending further examination of monopolies—the Provinces and States act as the agents of the Centre for the procurement of Central requirements, and uniformity is not insisted upon. The most important thing to bear in mind is the elimination of competitive buying.

On the subject of monopolies, my provisional view is that too much stress has been laid upon their procurement aspect. It is said that there would be very grave difficulties in assessing the producers' needs, and in acquiring all foodgrains produced in excess of those needs. This is no doubt true, though successful monopolies are being operated in parts of the Middle East (Egypt and Syria for example) and, I understand, in the Travancore State. But surely it is the distribution aspect that is the more difficult. If a Government—Central, Provincial or State—undertakes a monopoly it must, before the first purchase is made, be quite clear about physical handling and the working of the entire distribution chain. In Egypt, I am told that all buying is done by the "Credit Agricole", and that storage sheds have been erected to receive the produce of groups of villages pending its onward transmission.

I should like Governors to consider the possibility of monopolies. But the more urgent matter for them at the present time is to examine closely their actual procurement machinery to ensure *first* that it does not bear too heavily on particular producing areas; *secondly* that competitive buying is eliminated; and *thirdly* that leakage to the black-market is reduced to the minimum. For reasons already explained above, and stated in different terms by the Foodgrains Policy Committee, the object of procurement is in the Committee's words "to acquire from the cultivator in every part of India the maximum amount of foodgrains"[3] subject always to the cultivator's own reasonable health and welfare. This is the first step towards fulfilling the obligation to put the whole of our resources into a common pool. I fear that in some Provinces the Foodgrains Control Order is no more than a dead letter or at best a weapon occasionally

used to deal with a recalcitrant trader. The Order provides the means of locating stocks and controlling the operations of traders as well as producers. It appears that no rational system of food economy can be maintained unless this Order is adequately administered by a proper staff. I should like any suggestions for the improvement of the Order which Governors have in mind.

I cannot leave the subject of procurement without referring to the question of providing the cultivator with additional consumers' goods. This is an issue to which the Foodgrains Policy Committee drew special attention.[4] We at the Centre have already succeeded, as far as textiles are concerned, in reducing prices and making available to Provinces a considerable current supply of cloth, though I understand that some Provinces have received larger supplies than others. There is, however, an impression that the available supplies are not reaching the villages. I suggest that Governors satisfy themselves that the distributive machinery in their Provinces is working adequately. The Centre is about to embark upon control-schemes relating to medicines and drugs and the Provincial authorities will be expected to see to it that our plans are not frustrated by local inactivity or indifference.

(*iv*) *Distribution and Consumption.*—The crying need is rationing in the larger towns. I know that the Governors of some surplus Provinces disagree, but I feel that they are wrong. If we look on this as a world problem, we must treat India as a unit, and do our best to be fair both to territorial areas and to individuals. It is the fairness of the British rationing system that is responsible for its outstanding success. Wherever you may be in the country and whoever you may be, your rations are the same.

I want Governors to do all they can to expedite urban rationing. I shall be most interested in their views on this question, and also on the state of distribution generally in their respective Provinces and the possibility of improving it.

(*v*) *Prices.*—The Foodgrains Policy Committee advocated statutory price control and stated as the conditions precedent:—

(*a*) adequate procurement machinery;
(*b*) rigorous and drastic enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order;
(*c*) effective control over transport.

I shall be interested to hear how far these conditions are now satisfied, and how far Governors feel able to enforce, or press their Ministers to enforce, Statutory Price Control.

(*vi*) *Propaganda.*—I do not think it will be possible to achieve our objects, unless these are fully explained to those most directly interested. Much play has been made in some Provinces with alleged injustices to the cultivator so far as the ratio between foodgrains prices and the prices of the goods he himself requires is concerned. Procurement, especially monopolistic procurement,

[3] See *ibid.*, p. xii. [4] See *ibid.*, pp. 47–50.

cannot be successful, unless it is explained that Government intends to see that the cultivator has a "square deal". In fact, our actual control over textile prices and supplies, and our projected control over medicines and drugs, as well as our efforts to procure iron and steel and other consumers' goods for the cultivator will go a long way to satisfy what we recognise to be very real necessities. It is not desirable to let our efforts be frustrated by malicious propaganda. No doubt the best propaganda is an actual increase in supplies and a real control of prices, but no harm can be done by insisting on the fact that efforts are being made to meet the cultivator's needs. In the villages propaganda can perhaps best be conducted through the Land Revenue Staffs. The views of Governors on the methods to be employed would be of interest.

As regards the urban population in the surplus Provinces, I feel that propaganda is necessary to overcome the prevalent idea that rationing is a punishment, instead of a patriotic contribution to the War, and the only sure way of arriving at equality of sacrifice among *Indians as Indians*. If Governors think it desirable, it might further be emphasised that the surplus Provinces of India are only being asked to do what, e.g. Australians and Americans are doing and, after all, if we *are* to receive imports of foodgrains, it is from these countries and from these countries alone, that they will come. Propaganda in the towns could be conducted by the Press and on the Radio, and I should like to know whether Governors would welcome the participation of the Information and Broadcasting Department in provincial campaigns.

(*vii*) *Relations between the Provinces and the Centre*.—Have Governors any suggestions to make? In particular have Governors any views on improving the work of Regional Food Commissioners and their own contacts with them?

5. I revert now to the constitutional change mentioned in paragraph 3 above. It has been suggested[5] that the powers of Governors to deal with a food crisis are inadequate; that a well-intentioned but sluggish Ministry can drift slowly into an economic breakdown without at any stage clearly justifying intervention under Section 93 of the Constitutional Act; that it is not easy to find justification for applying Section 52–(1) (*a*) of the Act to an economic crisis; that the remedy under Section 126–A is too slow; and that the real remedy is a war-time amendment to the Act, on the lines of Section 57, empowering Governors to act in their discretion to deal with any actual or apprehended economic breakdown likely to cause widespread and prolonged hardship to the inhabitants of a Province or any considerable section of them.

The Viceroy and the Secretary of State have hitherto held that the present powers of Governors are adequate, and have not favoured any amendment of the Act. I would myself prefer not to promote any amendment likely to be interpreted as striking at the roots of Provincial Autonomy or as excluding

Ministers from the administration of subjects of vital importance to the great mass of the people. But I do not regard an amendment as wholly out of the question, and I should like the views of Governors on this matter.

6. So far I have been concerned with our long-term plan. In areas such as Bengal, while the long-term plan must, of course, be pursued, it is more urgent to undertake the measures necessary for the immediate relief of suffering. I shall be interested to hear the latest news of conditions in the Provinces, and whether Governors apprehend any extension of distress. I should also like to consider whether Provinces could between them find the personnel for an Emergency Rescue Team, consisting of Land Revenue Officers, Engineers, and Doctors, who could be moved at short notice into areas severely affected by shortage of food. I realise that this will be very difficult, but if each Province could earmark two Land Revenue Officers, two Engineers, and two Doctors for emergency duty of a temporary character in other Provinces the benefit might be considerable.

7. Finally, while I am pressing, and shall continue to press, His Majesty's Government for the imports recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee, I am convinced that we shall be failing in our duty if we do not place our food economy on a sound footing at once, and that we can, in my judgment, do this only if we give a very clear lead to the Ministries and to the Services. Until every member of the Services concerned—especially in the districts—realises that this is his business, and that other things must if necessary wait, we shall not get the required result.

W[AVELL]

[5] See Nos. 124, 125 and 131.

198

Memorandum by Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/PO/10/21

SECRET *Undated*

GOVERNORS' MEETING—NOVEMBER 1943

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION

Post-War Reconstruction includes two groups of subjects—*first*, those arising directly out of the liquidation of the war, which really form part of the war effort; and *secondly* those concerned with developments after the war. In the first group are the determination of war contracts, the disposal of immovable property held for war purposes and not required in peace-time, the disposal of surplus stocks of all kinds, and the demobilisation or dispersal, and where

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 8 November 1943 from Lord Wavell to Mr Amery.

necessary the re-settlement, of persons employed in the Defence Services or in work which will cease with the war. In the second group fall all subjects of a national plan for economic and social improvement.

2. The main responsibility for subjects in the first group must fall initially upon the Centre and plans covering the Central obligations are in hand. But while the Provinces are perhaps not greatly interested in our treatment of contracts and disposals, they are from several points of view concerned in the demobilisation of the Defence Services, and in the disposal of war-workers. Moreover, their co-operation is essential in Central plans for re-settlement, such as the scheme recently circulated by the Defence Department (Annexure I)[2] for the use of the Post-War Reconstruction Fund for the benefit of the enlisted classes, or the Labour Department's scheme for the establishment of Labour Exchanges.

The Provinces have also obligations of their own in this group. The official agencies producing or procuring goods for the Central Government from the smaller industries will have to be wound up, and the Provincial Departments responsible for civil supplies will, presumably, have contracts in force when the war ends which must be suitably dealt with. Provincial Governments doubtless hold land for Civil Defence purposes, and may hold fairly considerable stocks of food and Civil Defence and other stores. They have their Civil Defence Services and Civic Guards, and perhaps additional police recruited for the war.

The points which we might profitably discuss at our meeting are, I suggest, the following:—

(*i*) Do Governors feel that Provincial Governments are sufficiently informed of the Central Government's planning for this group of subjects? If not, are there any matters on which information is specially needed?

(*ii*) Are Provincial Governments alive to the need for a provincial plan, and what progress has been made with the preparation of such a plan?

3. In dealing with the second group of subjects we must take account of the facts—

(*a*) that in almost all fields normal progress has been retarded during the war;

(*b*) that the people of India, like the people of other countries, will expect us as soon as possible after the war not only to make good such ground as we have lost, but to plan and execute general and far-reaching improvements; and

(*c*) that there is a widely-held belief both in Great Britain and in the United States that the British have failed to develop natural resources and to improve standards of living in India, and that nothing short of a national plan of the most sweeping character will remedy the poverty and backwardness of the country.

I need not amplify (*a*) and (*b*); but (*c*) is an interesting development which merits examination. British opinion was, I believe, shaken by the apparent apathy of the people of Malaya and Burma to the Japanese invasion. British administrators had, it seemed, failed to inspire affection for the British connection, or even contentment, in those countries. The journalistic spotlight was rapidly shifted to India, where it was easy to discover poverty, ignorance, disease, and dirt on a gigantic scale. Casual visitors to India from England, the Dominions, and the United States received unfavourable impressions, and many men serving in the fighting forces are known to have been shocked by Indian conditions. The observations which have to some extent awakened the British conscience are in many respects superficial. The observers were not in touch with the realities of Indian politics, and tended to regard as "puppets" Indian Ministries which in effect exercise wide independent powers; they thought in terms of their own countries, and failed to see that by British or American or Australian standards, a country of small-holding farmers must itself be poor; they made no attempt to study the District administration, or the services provided for the villager which in many parts of India are reasonably effective; and they ignored the great irrigation systems, the railways, and the other public works which have in little more than two generations changed the face of the country. Above all, they entirely overlooked the effect of the rapid growth of the population of India in neutralising measures to increase production and to raise the standard of living. The point is not, however, that our performance in India can be defended, but that it is admittedly defective in many respects, and that quite apart from our own feelings on the subject we shall be pressed and expected to carry out a large programme of improvement. The interest extends to Members of the War Cabinet, and we shall receive all possible sympathy and help from His Majesty's Government.

4. It is clear that in the second group of subjects the main difficulty will be finance. We shall have large sterling balances at the end of the war, but it will not be easy to use them; and the recurrent burden of any programme is a far more serious matter than the initial burden.

There are two extremely important subjects for which adequate finance should in any case be forthcoming—Electrical and Industrial expansion. I do not propose to say anything about Railway Development, the extension of the telegraph and telephone systems, and Civil Aviation, all of which are important, but which might be undertaken without great financial difficulty; they are mainly Central subjects.

(*a*) *Electrical Expansion.*—This is essential not only to industrial expansion, but to various forms of urban and rural improvement, (e.g. town planning and slum clearance schemes, development of chemical fertilisers and tube-well

[2] Not printed. See L/E/8/2527: ff 48–50.

irrigation). Discussions between the Centre and the Provinces and States have just begun, and it would be premature for me to express an opinion as to the administrative organisation required, as to the places at which existing units are to be extended or new units installed, or as to State *versus* private ownership. I believe that the capital required could generally be raised by loans, whatever the ownership may be. The important thing at the present stage is for Provinces to approach the whole problem broad-mindedly. The best results will not be secured by thinking in terms of Provincial and State boundaries, and co-operation on a regional basis will be needed. I shall be glad to know whether Governors think that they or their Ministries will have any difficulty in co-operating.

(*b*) *Industrial Expansion*. Discussions between the Centre, leading business interests and Provinces and States have just begun. It is expected that Indian industry will find the finance required, and the main difficulties will be to make a coherent plan and to get it carried out within a reasonable time. Have Governors any suggestions to make on the procedure adopted by the Centre, and are they satisfied that Provincial Governments are sufficiently in the picture?

Industrial expansion, if it is to proceed on sound lines, must be based on research. Experience in the United Kingdom, the United States and the U.S.S.R. amply confirms this view. Governors are no doubt aware of the activities of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research, but these are only a start. I am investigating the possibility of increasing the scope of research in India as soon as the war is over. Planning for this has already begun, and Professor A. V. Hill, Secretary to the Royal Society, will shortly pay us a visit and advise on the organisation required.

Before leaving Electrical and Industrial expansion it is proper to point out:—

First that the Sterling balances should provide ample Sterling exchange against the rupee finance for capital goods;

Secondly that planning must be completed as quickly as possible, since manufacturing firms will have many eager customers and post-war orders are already being booked;

Thirdly that His Majesty's Government will undoubtedly help in securing for us experts and technicians, and in training Indians for the higher supervisory posts. Mr. Ernest Bevin himself told me that he could arrange the training of Indians for supervisory and "officer" posts, and could do so now much [? more] easily than after the war;

Fourthly that both subjects are intimately connected not only with demobilisation, dispersal of labour, and re-settlement, but with the remainder of the second group subjects. If the object of a social and economic programme is to improve standards of living, industrialisation in the widest sense is a most important element in it.

5. The remaining subjects in the second group are, I think:—

(*a*) Communications;
(*b*) Irrigation Schemes;
(*c*) The Medical & Public Health Services;
(*d*) Education;
(*e*) The Agricultural, Veterinary & Co-operative Services; and
(*f*) Town planning and Slum clearance.

All these subjects are wholly or mainly provincial, and with the exception of remunerative irrigation schemes, all require a very large net outlay if substantial improvements are to be made. In a recent circular letter to Provincial Governments (Annexure II)[3] the Central Government have made it clear that no immediate forecast can be given of the financial aid to be made available by the Centre to the Provinces; that the Provinces must plan on generous lines; and that any schemes of additional taxation with a view to building up post-war reconstruction funds will have much value as an antidote to inflation.

In Great Britain, the suggestion made to me from several quarters was that the Centre and the Provinces should not only encourage electrification and industrialisation, but should—from loans if necessary—embark upon an extensive programme designed to improve the knowledge, health, and purchasing power of the mass of the people. It was contended that such a programme would ultimately and indirectly pay for itself. It was suggested that the Centre might find a considerable part of the finance required, and might secure the full co-operation of the Provinces by a grant-in-aid scheme, which would include as one of its conditions the right of the Centre to supervise and inspect the relevant provincial activities.

While I agree that action by the State can increase prosperity and purchasing power—the provincial Agricultural Departments have proved that, to take only one example—I doubt if the advocates of comprehensive action have realised how large our Indian problems are, and how difficult it is to find finance on an adequate scale. It is not that we do not know what needs to be done; for over the greater part of the field we already have an organisation of a kind, and have evolved more or less satisfactory administrative units the cost of which is accurately known. It is therefore easy enough to plan. The difficulty lies in execution. It is perhaps worth studying the six heads mentioned above before attempting to reach conclusions.

6. (*a*) *Communications.*—Good roads are the first essential to any comprehensive scheme of progress, and should be made at the early stages. The use of institutions (such as schools, hospitals and dispensaries) the development of agriculture, the spread of education and in fact general progress of any kind

[3] Not printed. See L/E/8/2527: ff 51–3.

must begin with the improvement of the roads. But here again the cost, both initial and recurrent, is high.

(*b*) *Irrigation Schemes.*—All irrigation schemes should pay something towards interest on capital and working expenses, and the best of them are highly remunerative. There should be less difficulty about these than about other items in a comprehensive programme. I am not sure what schemes are ready for execution. The question of getting back irrigation experts from military service is already being taken up.

(*c*) *Medical and Public Health Services.*—There is scope for enormous expansion here. Health organisation is at present in many respects in a rudimentary stage. The Health Survey and Development Committee recently appointed by the Central Government should afford guidance on the directions in which development can be most profitably pursued. Such a programme, if it is to show definite results, will necessarily require a very considerable increase in the capital and recurring expenditure on the medical and public health services.

(*d*) *Education.*—The Educational Adviser's Memorandum[4] on Education has not yet been officially considered in detail, but Governors are aware that it covers the entire educational system of the country from the Primary schools to the Universities, and contemplates net expenditure amounting in round figures to Rs. 280 crores per annum. The peak would not be reached for about forty years. The estimate for Primary and Middle schools alone is Rs. 200 crores per annum. No comprehensive scheme would be complete without a vast expansion in educational facilities but personally I regard the improvement of Communications and Health as being of more urgent importance. I am not sure how far Provincial Governments have gone in serious plans for the complete removal of illiteracy, and for adult education. Technical and Commercial Education are clearly of direct importance in relation to any plans for industrial development. I understand that the Central Advisory Board of Education feel that there should be an all-India body to supervise and control technical education, at any rate, at its higher stages.

The use of broadcasting both in schools, and as a means of spreading knowledge in the villages is a possibility on which Governors may have ideas. I had a report prepared by one of the leading Radio firms on a broadcasting system for India, which shows the immensity of the problem.

(*e*) *Agricultural, Veterinary, and Co-operative Services.*—It is probable that substantial results could be achieved with relatively small expenditure. It is commonly held that great improvements in agriculture are impossible unless land tenures are so changed as to admit of mechanical agriculture. I do not know whether this is so, but it would be of interest to try an experiment, e.g. by arresting consolidation proceedings mid-way in a few selected villages, and applying the collective principle with the consent of the people.

(*f*) *Town planning and Slum Clearance.*—This subject has so far received

comparatively little attention. It is a subject on which very large sums of money can be spent without making much impression on the problem. It is particularly important that, as industries expand, Provincial Governments should from the first insist upon the establishment and maintenance of hygienic conditions for the workers.

It seems, therefore, that of the six subjects discussed all except one (*e*) might well involve an almost unlimited financial liability.

7. Some of our present difficulties arise from unbalanced development—the neglect of girls' education in favour of boys' education, the neglect of primary in favour of higher education, the neglect of communications in favour of other activities, and so on—and it is most desirable that State action should be balanced. It is also desirable that Provincial Governments should keep roughly in line, having regard to the special circumstances and needs of individual provinces. It would be useless to plan without regard to financial considerations, and any substantial programme would have to be spread over several periods of (say) from three to five years, concentrating first on measures best calculated to produce quick results in increasing material prosperity. For example at the first stage an attempt might be made to make real progress with roads, irrigation schemes, and the Agricultural, Veterinary, and Cooperative Services, the planning and training and a limited advance for the other subjects being undertaken in the meantime. The other subjects would then be dealt with more fully at the second and subsequent stages. The problem is an extraordinarily difficult one, and it would help if Governors could let me know how they and the Provincial Governments are thinking about it.

8. It might assist discussion if I recapitulate the points we might try to deal with:—

(*i*) Are Governors satisfied that Provincial Governments are sufficiently informed of Central plans for the determination of contracts, the disposal of property and stocks, and demobilisation and kindred matters?

(*ii*) Are Provincial Governments making their own plans for action as in (*i*) in the Provincial field?

(*iii*) Are Provincial Governments sufficiently informed about Central intentions for electrical and industrial expansion, and do Governors think that their attitude on electrical expansion will be sufficiently broad-minded? Have Governors any observations to make about industrial research?

(*iv*) How far are Provinces prepared to go in planning in the Social and Economic field, and are any large-scale programmes likely to be suggested from the Provincial end?

[4] A copy of Mr J. P. Sargent's *Post-War Educational Development in India* is on L/S&G/File 2515 of 1943.

(*v*) Do Provinces expect that their reconstruction programmes will involve expenditure substantially exceeding their revenue and borrowing capacity, thus necessitating Central assistance? In respect of schemes largely dependent upon Central assistance would Provinces submit to supervision and inspection by the Centre?

If any large programmes are possible it will be necessary to increase technical and administrative staffs considerably. This could be done by importing experts, or by sending Indians to be trained abroad, or by a combination of both methods. It is necessary to consider now what additional administrators and experts are required (*a*) for planning, (*b*) for execution, and (*c*) for subsequent administration. This is a matter on which Governors are better able to express an opinion than I am at present; but I have the impression that—with the possible exception of the Irrigation Departments in the Provinces—no Department, Central or Provincial, is equipped to carry out a really extensive programme of improvement and expansion. The lay administrator in India is expected to cover an enormous field; and his expert colleagues—though many of them are of high quality—are too few to make an impression on all the problems with which they are confronted. If it is agreed that a considerable increase in staffs is necessary we must endeavour to build up Central bodies of experts whose services would be available to all the Provinces, and also administrative and expert organisations in the Provinces themselves. The general views of Governors would be very welcome. For planning, I believe we should ask now (or very shortly) for any help we need from the United Kingdom.

It is obvious that a most extensive programme is needed in the social and economic field; that to achieve such a programme self-denial will be necessary but well worth while; and that if we are to succeed, both the Centre and the Provinces must begin to plan actively now, and must not hesitate to secure the services of experts from abroad to assist them.

199

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *1 November 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

The only important activity of the week was our visit to Bengal. We travelled by air both ways—in the "*Lodestar*" Peirse uses for his tours—and I hope to get round all the Provincial Capitals during the winter in this way. Air travel not only reduces very greatly the security precautions which are such a nuisance

to Viceroys and Provincial Governments, but enables one to do a great deal more work. The trip from New Delhi to Calcutta in a modern aircraft takes little more than four hours.

2. You have had my telegram No. 2396–S[1] of the 29th October, giving an appreciation of conditions in Bengal. We arrived in Calcutta shortly after noon on the 26th October, and I had a talk with Rutherford before lunch. After lunch I saw individually the Chief Minister, and the Ministers for Revenue, Agriculture, and Food. My main impression of them was that they did not really know what was happening. They are pleasant enough to deal with, but are not in any sense leaders, and are far too sensitive to political opposition and criticism. Suhrawardy, the Food Minister, is reputed to be the strong man of the Cabinet; his faults are verbosity and lack of method, and his officials find him far from easy to work with.

After dinner Rutherford took us both to see some of the destitutes who have thronged into Calcutta and whose number is loosely put at 150,000. These people sleep at night in parks and other open spaces, on pavements, and on railway premises—but always near the kitchens from which they receive their dole of cooked food by day. Sanitary conditions are shocking, and one has to walk warily and use an electric torch in the black-out. Most of the people in the groups seen were women and children, and the condition of all was poor and of many very bad indeed. Rutherford has, as you know,[2] been pressing the Ministry to get these people into proper camps, where they can rest and receive food and medical attention. The Ministry finally advised him to make an Ordinance taking special powers, and this was done[3] just before my visit. But I saw no sign of any action, and it is difficult to understand why the Ministry tolerated for so many weeks this advertisement of incompetence and lack of decision. The death-rate among the destitutes is high, which is not surprising as those who are ill and cannot go to the kitchens have no guarantee that they will be fed, and there is no organised medical attention. My wife and I were shocked at what we saw. The only redeeming feature is that (as will appear when I recount my doings on 28th October) the kitchen service seems to have arrested the physical decline of those who were not already too far gone. I decided at once that I must, if necessary, direct the Bengal Government to get the destitutes out into camps.

3. I spent the whole of the 27th October in the Contai sub-division of the Midnapore district. My wife did not accompany me, but stayed in Calcutta and made some visits of her own. I flew to Kharagpur taking Rutherford and some of my Personal Staff with me. From Kharagpur we motored to Contai, and a description of what we saw is given in the attached note which was prepared immediately after the visit. I was confirmed in my initial impression

[1] No. 193. [2] See Nos. 125, 151 and 158. [3] See No. 187, para. 3.

that information of what is happening is inadequate. The young Sub-Divisional Officer (an Indian) is doing exceedingly well in most difficult conditions, but there is much sickness to deal with for which drugs and medical facilities are wanting, the supply of food is short, and the arrangements for receiving and accommodating starving and exhausted people are primitive. The note gives some figures, and brings out the point that the classical symptoms of widespread distress—a sharp increase in land sales and mortgages, and the sale of domestic utensils and ornaments—are present. Contai is not a pretty picture; I hope things may not be quite so bad anywhere else, but the impression I carried away with me was that the productivity of the sub-division might well be impaired for an indefinite period by the physical weakness of the inhabitants and by migration, unless we could at once inject organised reinforcements into the civil administrative system.[4]

4. On the 28th October, I saw the officials responsible for the food administration, the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, and a few leading non-officials (N. R. Sarkar, Burder, and D. P. Khaitan). I also had a further discussion with the Governor. At noon I interrupted my interviews in order to visit with my wife four or five of the Calcutta Food Kitchens. Good work is being done both by Government and by voluntary organisations, and at one large kitchen which we saw, the people though emaciated seemed to have some vitality, and the organiser said that they had improved considerably during the past three weeks.

Before leaving Delhi I had told Auchinleck that I should probably have to call in the Army to help in the rural districts, and I had, earlier in my visit, seen Mayne, and Williams (Air Vice-Marshal, R.A.F.) and explained to them what was in my mind. I was not greatly impressed by the officials. In the old days the senior members of the I.C.S. were to some extent public figures, and performed, without thinking twice about doing so, functions which with you or in a Dominion would be regarded as ministerial. They held themselves morally and personally responsible for the welfare of the people in their charge, and would no more have tolerated in Calcutta, than you would tolerate in London, the disgraceful episode of the destitutes. One effect of provincial autonomy, in Bengal at least, seems to have been to break the spring of the civil services. It will take time—possibly a very long time—to produce ministers of real ministerial calibre; on the other hand the civil servants have immediately been relegated to the subordinate rôle which is appropriate enough under strong ministerial guidance but entirely inappropriate with ministers who are timid and vacillating. This is perhaps the inevitable consequence of establishing democratic institutions in a country not fully ready for them, but I am not sure that those responsible for the Constitution Act foresaw the "time-lag" between the change in the status and functions of the civil services and the evolution

of competent political leadership. The officials did not seem to me to be conscious of the disgrace brought upon the administration by conditions such as those among the destitutes in Calcutta or in the Contai sub-division, and there was little sense of the urgency and importance of the whole business. I was confirmed in my view that organised reinforcements must be injected into the civil administrative system, and suggested to my visitors that the army was the only possible source of such reinforcement. The reactions of the officials were passive—even the Commissioner of Dacca, who has a tremendous problem on his hands, did not seem greatly interested. The Ministers on the other hand seemed to welcome it. I decided to go ahead, and when I met the Governor and all the Bengal Ministers at 6.15 p.m. I made a full statement of my views. The Governor and his Ministers agreed to the issue to the Press of an announcement embodying our immediate decisions, and this announcement was made at a press conference at 9.45 p.m. I enclose a copy of the heads of my statement to the Bengal Cabinet, and of the announcement.

During the day my wife had made further visits in Calcutta. She saw several of the hospitals and relief centres, and though again impressed by the good work being done in the city, felt that the arrangements were in many respects inadequate, and that the organisation (e.g. for the supply of drugs) was defective.

I saw Mayne again after dinner, and gave him a telegram to be despatched to Auchinleck asking for his help (copy enclosed).

5. We returned to New Delhi on the 29th October. Since then the Army have got moving and Wakely has been sent to Calcutta to get the movements control going. Richardson (who dealt with the Hurs in Sind, and is now a D.C.G.S.) has also flown down to Calcutta with full information about the troops and resources available to make a plan for the affected districts with Mayne and the Bengal Government. I have meanwhile prevailed upon Mudaliar to release at once to Rutherford, Eliott-Lockhart and Elkins, two of the ablest businessmen in Calcutta, who are now serving there in the Supply Department. So far, so good. But the Bengal situation is most serious and I hope you will bring this home to the War Cabinet.

6. Herbert's progress is, I am sorry to say, most disappointing. He seems to react unfavourably to blood transfusions—he had his fourth just before we arrived at Calcutta. I saw him for a few minutes; he looks desperately ill and has the state of Bengal very much on his mind. Grant Massie—perhaps the best Surgical Consultant in India—advised against an operation and in favour

[4] In para. 2 of his report of 4 November 1943, Sir T. Rutherford remarked: 'The good effects of Your Excellency's visit to Calcutta and the Mofussil to see things for yourself have been widely acknowledged in the Press. I suppose you realise you were wandering about the supposedly worst terrorist district in Bengal with no more guard than our two gunmen, and the District Magistrates, two Punjabis.' L/P&J/5/150: f 75.

of complete rest. So it seems that at best Herbert must stay in bed for three months in Calcutta. Lady Mary is most courageous about her troubles, and makes light of her own illness.

7. I have telegraphed[5] to you about the Governorship of Bengal. Rutherford is at the top of the second-class but definitely not in the first. Bengal needs a Governor "with a fire in his belly", who does not worry too much about constitutional forms and is determined to get things done. It is a magnificent opportunity for a first-class man who is ready to sacrifice his immediate prospects to do work of the highest importance to the prosecution of the war. Can you find me such a man? If he did not want to commit himself to peacetime administration in India I would not object. The immediate and most pressing need is leadership; without it nothing I can do from here can ensure that Bengal will not slip deeper into the mire, but with it the situation would be by no means hopeless. Please do not think that I regard Rutherford as incompetent. He is solid and entirely reliable, and is liked and respected by everyone. But he has not, in my opinion, the fire necessary to get the Ministry actively behind him and to restore morale among the officials.

8. The food situation generally is not yet too clear, but the Foodgrains Policy Committee's report[6] put things on the right lines and I very much hope that Srivastava, who is ably helped by Hutchings, will produce results. There are rumblings from the Punjab about both rationing and price control, and I am going there on the 24th November to wrestle with the Ministers.

9. My task in the Punjab should be made easier by a conference of all Governors which I have called for the 19th and 20th November to discuss mainly food, but also perhaps post-war reconstruction in the provinces. A conference of this kind is without precedent; it has apparently been felt that a discussion between all the Governors together and the Viceroy would be resented both by the Provincial Ministries and by the Executive Council. In issuing my invitations, I was of course careful to explain that I did not intend to take decisions over the heads of Provincial Ministries and that my object was rather to establish personal contacts with Governors, to give them all an opportunity of exchanging ideas, and to guide them as Heads of their Provinces on matters of general policy. All the Governors have welcomed the conference, some of them with enthusiasm. The Executive Council, to whom I communicated my intention, seemed quite to approve it. Incidentally at the same meeting (on 25th October—the only meeting so far) Council accepted without comment my statement about Rowlands and his staff.

2 November 1943

10. Home Department will inform you officially of the receipt of another letter[7] from Gandhi, but I enclose a copy, as the official report to you will not

catch today's bag. Gandhi shows no sign of a change of heart and indeed expresses definite approval of the Congress resolution of August 1942. We shall merely acknowledge the letter, but I have agreed to a suggestion by Maxwell that the I.G. of Police, Bombay, should visit the Members of the Working Committee at Ahmednagar to see how they are getting on, and should take the opportunity of ascertaining their general attitude.[8] Maxwell points out that we have no recent intimation of what these people are thinking.

11. The Maharaja of Mysore has weighed in with a particularly large contribution to the War Purposes Fund—ten lakhs of rupees—for which I have thanked him warmly. The fund has now a balance of over a crore of rupees, but Linlithgow knowing what large demands must fall on the fund during the period of offensive activity against the Japanese and in the post-war years was never frightened of a large balance, and I see no need for a change of policy.

12. I am in the middle of a meeting of the National Defence Council (on 1st, 2nd and 3rd November), with anything up to five and a half hours a day in the Chair. This is a not very welcome interruption in my efforts to keep abreast of an amazing flood of paper. I am trying to reduce the length and number of telegrams, and hope I am succeeding!

13. Generally, my first impressions are that the food situation dominates the entire scene, and has for the moment pushed politics into the wings; that the Bengal famine (for it amounts to that) is a grave national crisis; and that the public will welcome almost any action by the Viceroy that is likely to restore the position in Bengal and stabilise the country's food economy. If I have to be rough with the Punjab Ministers I shall have the consolation that the great mass of public opinion—outside the Punjab—will be solidly behind me.

Enclosure 1 to No. 199

THE VICEROY'S VISIT TO CONTAI SUB-DIVISION; 27TH OCTOBER 1943

The party from Government House, Calcutta, consisted of His Excellency the Viceroy; His Excellency the Governor of Bengal; Mr. Hutchings; Mr. Baker; P.S.V.; and two As.-D.-C. The party travelled to Kharagpur by air, arriving there about 8 a.m., and was met by the Sub-Area Commander, Mr. Bell, District Magistrate, Midnapore, and Mr. Cowgill, Superintendent of Police, Midnapore. Mr. Bell and Mr. Cowgill joined the party for the trip onward to Contai.

[5] No. 192. [6] See No. 197, note 2. [7] No. 188.

[8] In a letter dated 16 November Sir R. Tottenham informed Mr Patrick that it had been decided not to proceed with this plan. L/P&J/8/623.

2. The party drove to Contai by car. At Egra a market was in progress. Some of the people seemed in poor condition but there were no visible signs of destitution on the main road.

At Satmile (7 miles from Contai), a destitute woman and several destitute children were seen in the bazar. The children were sucking water out of a bucket in which an old *gur* bag had been placed.

On the other side of the ferry at Satmile, Mr. Sen, the Sub-Divisional Officer, Contai, and Mr. Davies, a member of the Friends Ambulance Unit at Contai, met the party. They were picking up destitute children and their mothers for admission to the Children's Hospital at Contai. Mr. Davies stated that distress was very general in the area; that there was much disease, especially in the coastal strip; and that there was a shortage of quinine and, he believed, of Cholera vaccine.

At Contai, the Sub-Divisional Officer showed His Excellency over the Provat Kumar College. This institution is used as a reception station. 525 destitute persons were present including the day's new admissions. The arrangements are rudimentary; the people sleep on the floor, and many of them are in very poor condition. They are fed, and moved on as quickly as possible to other relief stations.

His Excellency was then shown the Infants Hospital at Contai,[9] where there are 47 patients. The rate of admissions is about 12 a day. The doctor-in-charge stated that he had an adequate supply of drugs; but Mr. Sen explained that he had had to buy these in the black market through the Friends Ambulance Unit, the Provincial Medical Department having run short.

His Excellency was then shown the Infants Hospital at Contai, where 24 cots have been installed. The first patients were about to be admitted. A lady doctor, trained at the Lady Hardinge College, New Delhi, is in charge.

His Excellency next visited the Contai Orphanage, managed by the Hindu Mission. There were 89 children in this institution. They seemed well and happy, and are looked after by women workers, though the head of the concern is a man. The Mission's work in Contai is financed almost entirely by Government, who allow both free rice and a money grant of Rs. 6 per child per mensem.

It was stated by the S.D.O. that transactions at the Registration Office at Contai show a considerable increase. This is a sign of distress in the area.

Proceeding, His Excellency was shown the relief home at Contai where there are 132 inmates, almost all children. This is not a highly organised concern and is somewhat congested.

Before leaving Contai town His Excellency visited one of the relief stores. The Sub-Divisional Officer stated that the present requirements were 2,300 maunds a day for the sub-division. Hitherto receipts had never exceeded 1,500 maunds on any one day. According to Mr. Martin's new estimate the needs of the sub-division were likely to amount to 3,500 maunds a day.

In Contai town itself, small groups of people could be seen on the roadside selling utensils and ornaments—another sign of general distress.

3. The party left Contai, and motored through a part of the coastal belt. Here there are signs of cyclone damage, and there has been considerable destruction of rice crops owing to floods.

His Excellency visited Mohoishagot in the coastal belt, some 4 miles from Contai, where a kitchen and milk distribution centre is run by the Friends Ambulance Unit. A large number of people were being fed. The mid-day meal only is provided, and the numbers fed are from 400 to 500 a day. The milk is received in powder form for distribution.

4. On the return journey the party passed a small orphanage at Balegai; and stopped for a few minutes at Egra to see the Emergency Hospital and the Orphanage. The doctor of the Emergency Hospital was out. There were a good many patients, many of them said to be suffering from bowel diseases. The Orphanage is the result of local effort, but is financed by Government. It accommodates 195 children at present. Nearly all these children are in very poor condition, and supervision appears to be inadequate.

At the Sub-Registrar's office it was ascertained that, as at Contai, there is a very considerable increase in petty sales and leases of land.

On the road from Egra towards Kharagpur, one dead body was seen.

Between Egra and Kharagpur the party visited a free kitchen at Bakharbad, where some 660 people are given one meal a day. The meal seen consisted of mixed rice and *dhal*. A Marwari member of the Union Board is in charge, and efficient accounts are kept. The people requiring relief are registered and have to present tickets in order to get their meal. They are permitted to take their food away with them if they wish to do so.

Finally, the party visited another kitchen at Mokrampur where about 700 meals are given a day. An Indian Christian named Sebastian seems to be the moving spirit here. The system appeared to be similar to that at Bakharbad.

5. Generally, according to Mr. Sen (who went back to Contai from Egra), about 312,000 people are receiving free meals in his sub-division, and about 38,000 are receiving doles of dry grain. This is a very considerable proportion of the total population of rather under 800,000.

6. The main difficulty in the sub-division is to secure regular supplies. According to Mr. Sen, only about half the free kitchens established were working at the time of His Excellency's visit.

7. Information about conditions in the villages is scanty; communications being extraordinarily bad. Mr. Sen has 22 officers specially appointed for relief work in specific groups of Unions.

9 Cf. opening of following para. One of these passages evidently contains an error.

8. His Excellency congratulated Mr. Sen on the energy he had displayed in getting relief work going in difficult conditions.

9. Before leaving the Kharagpur airfield for Calcutta, His Excellency, after discussion with His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, asked the Sub-Area Commander to give what help he could to Mr. Bell in improving transportation and distribution.

10. On the whole it is probably true that distress in the area seen is confined mainly to the labouring classes, but it is widespread and acute. It is difficult to say precisely how many deaths are due to famine, but Government measures are gathering momentum, and there is some evidence that the deterioration in the condition of the people has been partially at least arrested. The main needs seem to be extra staff and improved transportation.

E. M. JENKINS,—27.10.43.

Enclosure 2 to No. 199

STATEMENT

(1) I have not come to Calcutta to criticise the Bengal Government or its officers, but to do all I can to help in what is obviously a very difficult situation. I recognise its difficulty and what has been done, but I want to stress the necessity for speed.

(2) The first point I wish to stress is the extreme urgency and importance of your food problems and also the importance it has assumed in the eyes of the world. The desire uppermost in our minds is to save life and to relieve suffering. But this desire is not confined to Bengal alone; it is shared by the whole of India, and indeed the whole of the civilised world. Having just come from England, I know the deep interest taken in what is commonly called the "Bengal Famine" by the British Public and the British Press. On purely humanitarian grounds, we must satisfy our own consciences by acting as quickly and as firmly as we can. But there are other grounds to be considered of which, as statesmen and administrators, we must take account. India is the base for large-scale operations against Japan. No base for military operations can be satisfactory if its inhabitants are in grave distress. If we fail to set matters right as soon as we can, we shall stand condemned by the United Nations as the country whose indifference and inefficiency prolonged the war. In short, we are performing not merely on a Bengal stage, nor even on an Indian stage, but on a world stage. The Bengal Government has a tremendous opportunity before it. It has recently taken office, and has I understand the support of a substantial majority in the Legislature. If, in the course of the next few weeks, the Bengal Government, with such assistance as I am able to offer, can show itself capable

of relieving distress and getting the economy of the Province back to normality, then it can afford to disregard any criticism which is now being directed against it.

(3) I do not intend to deal with matters of detail, only with general principles. As often in cases of emergency, you have before you a short-term problem and a long-term problem.

(4) Let me take the short-term problem first. For various reasons, into which I will not now enter and it would be unprofitable to do so, there has been a breakdown in the economy of at least seven of your rural districts. They are, I understand, Midnapore, 24-Parganas, Dacca, Tippera, Chittagong, Faridpur and Mymensingh. There are others badly affected, but these are the worst. The breakdown has led to the influx into Calcutta and into some other large towns of destitutes in large numbers; and as it has proved impossible to move foodgrains fast enough into Calcutta and from Calcutta into the affected districts your measures for the immediate relief of distress have not yet been wholly effective. Even had movements been uninterrupted, your district staffs are working under great strain, and are hardly strong enough to carry you over the crisis. In Calcutta, and in the districts, the arrangements for the supply of drugs and for medical relief seem inadequate. Your rationing scheme for Calcutta, though initiated long ago, is not yet working; but until it is working you cannot hope to deal with the price and black-market difficulties with which you are beset. I am not stating these facts to blame or criticise but to show what your problem is.

(5) The answers to your short-term problem are, I am sure, as follows:—

(*a*) The destitutes must be got out of Calcutta—and out of any other large towns in which they have congregated. At present it is certain that the children and the infirm among them lead a precarious existence; that it is impossible to arrange the methodical diagnosis and treatment of sickness; and that these unfortunates are a menace to public health. The right and the humane course is to collect them in camps with proper arrangements for rest, food, and medical relief, and to return them to their homes as soon as they are sufficiently restored and they can be fed at their homes. His Excellency the Governor tells me that the necessary arrangements could be made without delay, and I advise you most strongly to make them at once. Of course, the opposition will object. They are only too glad to take advantage of this standing reproach to the administration. Having seen conditions in Calcutta myself I could not, as Governor-General, acquiesce in the destitutes being left as they are now, and I hope to hear on my return to New Delhi that the movement to camps has

begun and is proceeding vigorously. This is a matter on which I believe you will need no outside help.

(*b*) A movements control for foodgrains to the outside areas should be established on an adequate scale. For this I think you require some outside help. If you agree I can secure for you from the Commander-in-Chief a General Officer and staff with wide experience of work of this kind in difficult conditions.

(*c*) In the affected districts, while your long-term plan is maturing, I am prepared, if you agree, to ask the Commander-in-Chief to place the resources of the Army at your disposal to the maximum extent possible. The Army could certainly help most effectively with transport, the provision of temporary shelters, the establishment of relief stores, and even with actual distribution where conditions are really serious. The Army has already an organisation in many of the affected districts and is accustomed to deal with crises of this kind, i.e. the feeding and accommodation of large numbers in difficult conditions. They can also help with medical relief.

(*d*) The rationing scheme for Calcutta should be brought into operation at the earliest possible date. There is no time to delay for a perfect scheme, we must have a simple scheme which will work. This seems to me vital for the success both of your short-term and of your long-term plans.

(6) Before leaving the short-term problem, may I remind you of its extreme urgency, and ask you whether you want me to secure all the help I can from the Commander-in-Chief? If you do, I will try to arrange it immediately. Propaganda to restore confidence. I will try to give you some outside help.

(7) Your long-term plan must I suggest cover:—

(*i*) An immediate and considerable increase in district staffs, so as to ensure that accurate information is available.

(*ii*) Measures to improve production.

(*iii*) A sound procurement policy.

(*iv*) Adequate arrangements for distribution.

(*v*) The perfection of rationing in the large towns.

I have said that I do not intend to go into detail, and I will therefore confine myself to what seems to me the most difficult head—procurement.

(8) On procurement, it is arguable that the correct policy is a State monopoly —the procurement department reaching right down to the village and taking off all the foodgrains that the villagers themselves do not need for their own consumption. If time were available, I would favour this policy, and it might well be the ultimate aim. But I do not believe there is time to adopt it before

the *Aman* crop is cut, and I think also that in the present state of mind of the cultivators large-scale procurement at once might have a disastrous effect. I suggest for your consideration that the right policy will be to "isolate" Calcutta from the rest of the Province; to feed Calcutta from distant sources by arrangement with the Centre. This means special effort by the Centre, and some sacrifice by the rest of India to make you secure, but I think it can be done. The rest of the Province must feed itself and will not be called upon to contribute more than a limited amount to Calcutta until confidence is fully restored. Arrangements would be needed to ensure the movement of a certain amount of rice between Bengal and the neighbouring Provinces.

(9) In conclusion, I need only add that you will have the full support of the Central Government, and of myself personally, in all the short-term and long-term measures outlined above.

(10) I believe that it would have an excellent effect on public opinion if I could communicate to the Press tonight a statement on the following lines. (Draft for Press Conference to be read out).

Enclosure 3 to No. 199

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Viceroy spent the morning in discussions with the Civil Supplies Commissioner (Mr. H. S. E. Stevens), the Regional Food Commissioner, Eastern Area (The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Braund), the Rationing Controller, Calcutta (Mr. A. C. Hartley) and the Chief Secretary (Mr. A. deC. Williams). Before luncheon he visited Food kitchens in Calcutta accompanied by Her Excellency. He was impressed by much of the work being done by Government and Voluntary Effort. Mr. N. R. Sarkar lunched at Government House, and the Viceroy had a talk with him after luncheon.

In the afternoon the Viceroy saw the President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce (The Hon'ble Mr. J. H. Burder), Mr. D. P. Khaitan, Mr. M. A. Ispahani and the Commissioner, Dacca Division (Mr. A. S. Larkin). He had a further discussion with His Excellency the Governor. Her Excellency meanwhile visited the Behala Hospital.

At 6.15 p.m. he presided at a Conference at which His Excellency the Governor, the Chief Minister, and the Bengal Ministers were present. Certain senior officials were in attendance. The following programme was adopted for immediate execution:—

(1) The Bengal Government will arrange forthwith for the removal of the destitute people who have thronged into Calcutta to properly-managed rest camps, where they can receive food, clothing, and medical attention, and

from which they can be despatched to their homes as soon as they are sufficiently restored.

(2) As the movement of foodgrains from Calcutta to the districts affected by the emergency is one of the main difficulties to be dealt with, the Commander-in-Chief has agreed to make available to the Bengal Government a Major-General with considerable experience of work of this kind to assist them in improving and operating a suitable movements system.

(3) The Viceroy will ask the Commander-in-Chief to make the resources of the Army available to the maximum possible extent in the districts worst affected, particularly for the movement of foodgrains, the provision of temporary shelters for relief operations, and the establishment of relief stores. The Army may also be able to help in some areas with the actual distribution of food and with medical relief. Pending orders from the Commander-in-Chief the Viceroy yesterday requested the Sub-Area Commander at Midnapore—who was already assisting when called upon to do so—to confer with the District Magistrate and do everything possible to help.

Enclosure 4 to No. 199

TELEGRAM

VICEROY TO COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, INDIA

1. Have completed Bengal tour. Apart from matters with which Bengal Government can deal unaided main problems are *first* movement of foodgrains from Calcutta to rural districts and *second* organisation in worst affected districts themselves.

2. For *first* you kindly offered me Wakely or Beresford. I prefer Wakely. Can you instruct him proceed immediately Calcutta by air and report to Governor. Matter most urgent. Wakely will need staff. Suggest that to save time he obtains his requirements from Eastern Command after studying situation.

3. For *second* civil district organisation is inadequate and needs strengthening for all purposes particularly transportation, erection of temporary relief shelters, establishment of relief stores, distribution and medical relief. Officers may be required to obtain intelligence of actual situation in outlying areas not easily accessible. Am satisfied we must, as matter not only of civil but of military urgency, use all possible resources to help Bengal Government over critical period to end of December and possibly beyond. Am sure you will instruct all concerned to give maximum help possible. Please instruct Mayne to get into touch at once with Governor and Ministry. Essential for public confidence that activities begin within next few days. When I visited Midnapore yesterday I

asked Sub-Area Commander (Brigadier Barlow) to assist District Magistrate as much as he could.

4. I have discussed proposals with Bengal Ministers who welcome them and say that by giving effect to them we shall be giving most valuable help and shall also improve relations between the Army and the people.

200

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3299: f 278

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *2 November 1943, 11.25 pm*
Received: 2 November, 8.10 pm

2414–S. To assist in movement of food grains from Calcutta to rural districts Wakely and some Staff Officers have been placed at the disposal of the Governor of Bengal. Wakely will be responsible to the Governor and work in close touch with the Food Commissioner and Military Area Commanders. Military transport and Military Movement Control will be employed and grain on arrival in districts will be handed over to District Magistrates or their representatives.

2. Troops are being located throughout the worst affected districts to assist the civil authorities in movement and escorting of allotted quotas to villages. Military transport will be used within districts where communications permit.

3. Military will give assistance in provision and collection of material for temporary shelters which local (? inhabitants) will construct.

4. Two field ambulances, one casualty clearing station and additional medical officers and personnel are being made available for (? establishment) of small hospitals at numerous centres throughout the districts.

5. Troops are being drafted into Bengal from other parts of India to give assistance. Arrangements have been made for closest liaison and exchange of information between the (? civil) and military authorities at all levels and the G.O.C.-in-Chief Eastern Command has been appointed Supreme Liaison Officer with the Government of Bengal.[1]

[1] Subsequent telegraphic reports on military relief in Bengal are on L/E/8/3334.

201

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/I/1/1102: f 143

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *2 November 1943, noon*

25063. Your telegram 2403–S[1] of 30th October. Injudicious treatment to which you refer has I think been confined to two or three Dailies, but I am having confidential circular issued to principal editors requesting greatest discretion and restraint. I shall be careful not to encourage this tendency in my speech opening the Debate.[2]

[1] No. 195. [2] See No. 193, note 1.

202

Mr Amery to Sir J. Anderson

L/PO/2/16: f 2

INDIA OFFICE, *2 November 1943*

My dear John,

Is there really any great difference between the Indian situation over the sterling balances and that which we are dealing with in every country where we have maintained a fixed exchange and yet have drawn more upon their resources than we have been able to balance by exports during the war? In Iraq and Palestine, for instance, the exchange is kept at parity by the simple fact that the currency in each country is managed by a Currency Board, which meets issues of fresh currency on the spot by an increase of its holding in sterling securities. When I was Chairman of the Iraq Currency Board its circulation in Iraq and its sterling assets were in the neighbourhood of 4 millions. I believe they are now at least 4 or 5 times that figure and I rather think that the increase in the case of Palestine has been even greater. The mere fact that these boards actually sit in London and hold their securities here does not alter the fact that, as in the case of India, the securities are the backing of the local currency and any profits ultimately made over remittances etc. credited to the local Government. No doubt if we looked into the position in Egypt and East and West Africa, and very possibly also in the sterling Dominions, we should find much the same position, though of course in their case they have in large measure paid for their own overseas forces and equipment.

The real question of course is whether a poor country like India could ever have afforded, over and above what it has been asked to do for its own defence, to pay for its forces overseas and give as free lease-lend all the materials which we have bought from India during the war.

Yours ever,
L. S. AMERY

203

Governor-General (Food Department) to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *3 November 1943, 1.50 pm*
Received: 3 November, 11.15 am

No. 2415–S. Your telegram of 22nd October, No. 24237[1]. Wheat imports.

2. Arrivals of grain ships have had no appreciable effect on hoarding. Public and trade believe quantities are negligible and Punjab wheat market has hardened today. General situation still unsatisfactory. Distress is widespread in Bengal and exists in varying degrees in Orissa, Travancore and Cochin. Other deficit Provinces and States are living from hand to mouth.

3. Administrative measures proposed by Gregory Committee, procurement, distribution and rationing cannot succeed without adequate imports. These are foundation of whole scheme though quantity asked is very small compared with India's consumption. Without strong reserve position which only imports can ensure we are powerless. Even rationing is useless if we cannot make promised rations available or keep price reasonable. To expect rationing and improved procurement to lead to creation of reserve is to put cart before horse.

4. We should welcome 50,000 tons per month in January and February but what we want is firm announcement of minimum (repeat minimum) imports at this figure throughout year.

5. We would also press for early announcement of Canadian Government's offer of grain[2] and arrangements to transport it, or Australian equivalent.

6. As Gregory report says, we need total 1½ million tons foodgrains to make position in any way secure, and half million or say 50,000 per month is minimum to give us fighting chance of success. To enable us to restore confidence in Bengal and elsewhere announcement now is needed. Imported grain can be used in Calcutta and procurement in Bengal will become easier and prices drop.

[1] No. 185. [2] The India Office file on this subject has not been traced; but see No. 205, para. 2.

204

Mr Churchill to Mr Amery

L/PO/8/31: f 156

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, *3 November 1943*

Prime Minister's Personal Minute: Serial No. M.778/3

Secretary of State for India
I am thinking constantly about the Governorship of Bengal,[1] and I agree with you that a decision should be taken as soon as possible. I hope to let you have one next week.

W. S. C.

[1] See No. 196.

205

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *3 November 1943*
Received: 13 November

I need not say how glad I was to hear of your prompt action in looking at the Bengal situation for yourself and at once using your personal influence to make the Bengal Government do the right things. It has obviously had an excellent effect on the spot and also here, where it will greatly ease my task in tomorrow's debate. The Indian famine situation has stirred people here deeply and their natural emotion has been fully exploited by all the left-wing elements who are in any case anxious to find a stick with which to beat the Government dog, and feel that they can go for me freely without being accused of attacking Winston and the Coalition Government as such.

2. I was very disappointed yesterday[1] when the Cabinet finally decided that Mackenzie King's offer[2] could not be accepted owing to the difficulties of the shipping situation and that it was therefore better that it should not have to be mentioned. I pleaded strongly for giving it publicity, even if not more than one or two cargoes could be sent in the next few months, or even if the whole of the wheat had to be sent to England and an equivalent quantity of Australian wheat shipped to India. From a strict matter-of-fact point of view the case against the waste of shipping involved is unanswerable. So is the argument that apart from subscriptions to private benevolent agencies a mere lump sum grant to India as such means very little in view of the sterling balance situation. But

from the psychological point of view I feel that the thing would have been worth while both in India and in Canada, and not least in creating a real interest in Indian affairs in Canada.

3. From what you have telegraphed[3] about Rutherford, I have no hesitation in accepting your conclusion as the right one and I must now try and get Winston to address himself to the problem of finding someone really good enough for the task. I confess I should doubt whether Freyberg has got quite enough grey matter, though his rather boyish manner may have tended to make me underrate his ability. But it would I think in any case be very difficult to appoint a soldier in Bengal, on top, not only of your appointment as Viceroy, but also of the earlier appointment of Dill to Bombay. It would, I think, be taken as part of a general policy of militarising the Government. Later on, when provincial self-government gets into its normal stride again, there may be a good deal to be said for appointing distinguished men from the fighting services as Governors. The supply from home may not be easy to keep up, even for the Presidency Governorships, and certainly not for the whole range of the Provinces. Yet on the other hand it will become increasingly difficult to pick out European I.C.S. men and make them Governors over the heads of their Indian colleagues and of Ministers under whom they have served. No doubt the Governorships may be increasingly Indianised in course of time. But the one experiment of Sinha as permanent Governor was not too successful and until the communal issue is much more out of the way there may well be a natural inclination, outside purely political circles, to prefer the impartial Englishman. If anything in the nature of Coupland's regional scheme[4] came off, it might no doubt meet the situation if the Governors of the four regions were British and the Governorships of the Provinces within them gradually Indianised. However, all this bears on a future with which, I imagine, neither of us will be directly concerned.

Freyberg has not much grey matter but a greater determination and ability to get things done than anyone I know, a bigger asset than brains in Bengal at present.

W.

4. John Anderson has taken the Chairmanship of the Cabinet Committee on Indian Finances in hand with both vigour and ability. We had a long and useful meeting the other day,[5] as the outcome of which you will no doubt shortly receive strong recommendations about the increase of taxation and pushing on your loan policy. Meanwhile, the question of seeing what supplies from India we can do without here is being looked into by an official committee which is being set up and told to report as quickly as possible. The Treasury also mean

[1] The relevant War Cabinet Conclusions are not printed. [2] See No. 203, note 2.
[3] No. 192. [4] See No. 103, note 2.
[5] 1 November. The minutes (I.F. (43) 3rd Meeting) are on L/F/7/687.

to be helpful over gold and silver, and the question of getting more silver from the United States can now be taken up again, as Morgenthau has apparently returned to Washington from Africa. The matter came up in Cabinet last night[6] and Anderson's statement of the nature of the sterling balances problem began to make an impression, even on Winston, while Cherwell is being increasingly deflated.

5. Of course, the sterling balance situation will require much careful handling at the end of the war and no doubt something in the nature of a funding operation at a minimum rate of interest will become necessary. All the same, I do not myself feel quite so convinced of the gravity of the situation that will arise as some of the Treasury people have been inclined to be. For one thing, so long as the Indian currency remains on a large scale and is not seriously deflated, a great deal of the so-called sterling balance is necessarily kept in the Reserve Bank. Nor, to the extent to which it is not locked up, could India realise much out of hand without bringing about a depreciation of sterling itself and so injuring herself. Moreover, while it is perfectly true that this debt means that we shall have to give India a lot of goods for no immediate payment in return (which is only the converse of what India has been doing for us during the war), I do not regard that as a mere burdensome tribute. It should certainly give us an advantage in getting into the Indian market for capital goods and otherwise ahead of others and so prime the pump for the future of British export trade to India. I am by no means sure that I would not regard it as the best guarantee of continued intimate economic relations with India, and as a real help in keeping India within the British Commonwealth.

[Para. 6, on anti-malaria precautions for air passengers to India, omitted.]

[6] The relevant War Cabinet Conclusions are not printed.

206

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: f 141

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *4 November 1943, 2.30 pm*

1190. My private and personal telegram 1173[1] of 29th October. Curtin has declined to come for the Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting next month and as Fraser is ill whole project has been put off until next year. January is not possible but meeting may be in February or more probably later. I will keep you informed of developments.

In these circumstances I doubt immediate necessity or desirability of sending further Indian representatives to War Cabinet. There is in present circumstances little for them to do and unless you are under pressure I should be disposed to leave the position as it is at any rate until next year.

[1] Informing him attempts were being made to hold a Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting on 7 December but advising that no action should be taken for the time being as regards Indian representatives. L/PO/6/111: f 143.

207

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 504

R/30/1/4: ff 111–12

Shipment of Foodgrains to India

MEMORANDUM BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *4 November 1943*

On the 24th September[1] the War Cabinet decided that we should aim at shipping a total of 200,000 tons of foodgrains to India by the end of 1943, and that the position should be reviewed again at the end of the year in the light of the Indian harvests. It was subsequently arranged that this decision should be implemented by the shipment of 80,000 tons of wheat and wheat flour, almost entirely from Australia, and of up to 130,000 tons of barley from Iraq.

2. It is now clear that I must ask the War Cabinet to consider the question of additional imports without waiting for the end of the year, for the following reasons:—

(*a*) The forthcoming Indian rice harvest will not reach the market until January. During the period when the crop is awaited and when efforts are being made to draw an adequate part of it into governmental hands, it is important to give the impression both to the rice cultivators and to the holders of this year's surplus of Punjab wheat that, until ample supplies are forthcoming from them, a steady stream of imports will continue. If a decision regarding further imports is delayed until the end of the year, it would come too late to affect loadings in December, January and possibly February, and there would be a damaging interruption in the flow of arrivals.

(*b*) It is evident from the Viceroy's report[2] on his recent visit to Bengal that the Indian authorities are having great difficulty in holding the situation there with the supplies of cereals at their disposal. The urgent calls now

[1] No. 139. [2] No. 193.

being made for supplies to Bengal from other parts of India are trenching seriously upon the supplies required for other deficit areas, including Bombay and the Malabar States where the need is also urgent and where, but for the effective action taken by their Governments, the situation might have been as sensational as in Bengal.

(*c*) Owing to transportation difficulties in Iraq and the limited capacity of the port of Basra, it will not be possible to export from Iraq to India the full progamme of 130,000 tons of barley before the end of the year.

(*d*) There is increasing public pressure in this country for greater assistance to India by way of the shipment of cereals from overseas. If our refusal of the offer[3] of 100,000 tons of wheat by the Canadian Government becomes known, it will be desirable to show that adequate quantities of wheat are being shipped instead from other sources.

3. The War Cabinet will require the advice of the Minister of War Transport as to the amount of shipping which can be made available to load additional cereals for India. The Government of India's view[4] is that the minimum that will give them a fighting chance (as distinct from a good prospect) of extracting supplies and restoring confidence is an assurance of 50,000 tons per month for 12 months and authority to make an announcement that this has been promised. I do not know how far this is practicable. If the War Cabinet are not prepared to commit themselves to a long-term programme of this sort, I hope that at least they will agree that—

(*a*) there should be loaded for India from Australia—

(i) 50,000 tons of wheat before the end of 1943 additional to the 80,000 tons referred to in paragraph 1 above, and

(ii) 50,000 tons of wheat in January 1944 and a further 50,000 tons in February 1944;

(*b*) the question should be examined how much Iraqi barley can be made available for India after the present programme of 130,000 tons has been completed;

(*c*) the position should be examined again in January.

L. S. A.

[3] See No. 203, note 2. [4] No. 203.

208

Sir T. Rutherford (Bengal) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/150: f 76

4 November 1943

4. I got a copy of the report sent by the officer sent out on special duty to see what were the arrangements at destination for taking over and distributing food supplies sent both from Calcutta and Punjab to the districts, which suggested extreme mismanagement at Dacca and this has been followed up by a report from Wakely that 80 wagons of foodgrains had arrived and no arrangements made for their unloading until he intervened. Dacca is the headquarters of Larkin, Commissioner, and I have sent him a message which, I hope, will stir him up to take charge himself if the District Magistrate is not competent.

5. Martin, Relief Commissioner, reports that conditions in Chandpur, Tippera District, are ghastly due to the non-arrival of supplies. In Faridpur district he found arrangements made by the Collector, a Muhammadan officer of the Provincial Service, good chiefly because he had ignored instructions from the Revenue Department which is in charge of relief! But this kind of statement is rather typical of Martin who is a good officer but impulsive sometimes in the wrong direction.

6. By the 29th of October 2,800 destitutes had been removed to camps outside Calcutta and 450 had been repatriated to their villages. Word seems to have got round among the immigrants that they are to be taken up by the police and good numbers are of their own accord departing—*vide* the pictures enclosed[1] from the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. I will let you know the results of the daily reports ordered as from today later.

[1] Not reproduced.

209

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *6 November 1943*

Received: 17 November

The debate on the Indian famine[1] went reasonably well. A few people tried to make Party capital, and Schuster made a strong personal attack on myself

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 393, 4 November 1943, cols. 886–970.

and on the India Office. But as a whole the debate was well-balanced, though with an undertone of great anxiety as to whether we here were doing enough to help. On that, of course, neither Anderson nor I could give them more than generalities.

2. However, I am returning to the charge at the beginning of the week, and hope that at the least I may be able to get from the War Cabinet a further 50,000 tons a month for a couple of months, i.e. 100,000 tons above the 200,000 tons previously allocated, and of course I shall do my best to try and get them to make it a continuous 50,000 a month for as long as may be required. What I am least hopeful about is to get them to make it a definite previously announced figure.

3. The Canadian wheat offer has been a curious muddle. Winston's telegram to Mackenzie King asking him to say nothing about it was not sent off promptly with the consequence that Canada sent you their message announcing publication for the morning of the 5th before it arrived. Meanwhile, Massey, who had received a copy of the Canadian Government's telegram, sent it over to me in a letter on the 3rd which reached me on the morning of the 5th, too late to stop publication in India.[2] Mackenzie King may, I fear, be very much annoyed at publication taking place in India first and not in the Canadian Press. He is very touchy on these things. For myself, I am really very happy it has turned out that way, even if it may not be possible for a very long time to come to send any of the Canadian wheat—and as a shipping proposition it is certainly wasteful—we may be able to substitute Australian wheat for it in some way or other, and possibly the Canadian wheat may in the end come to this country or be held back as an ultimate reserve for India. But the psychological effect should be all to the good.

4. I had a talk with Winston yesterday about Bengal. He would not come to any sort of decision, but is apparently going to do a certain amount of reconstruction of the Government in a week or so and wants to keep the appointment open until he has settled that. One name that cropped up in conversation between us was that of Casey,[3] who may possibly feel that he has burnt his boats as regards Australian parliamentary life and may be tempted by a big and responsible administrative job.

5. I need not tell you what a good effect your visit to Bengal and all that you did there has had upon public opinion here and upon the House of Commons. I am only sorry that one or two ill-conditioned Members made it an occasion for casting a reflection on Linlithgow. As for yourself, I am sure that nothing could establish your Viceroyalty on a sounder foundation than having really tackled boldly and eventually overcome this immediate breakdown. Constitutional progress may well be out of the picture for the time being, both at your

end and at mine, but the more you can consolidate your own position and make the general temper of India both sweeter and more capable of facing realities the better.

[2] It was announced in the Indian Press that, subject to the availability of shipping, Canada had offered to give India 100,000 tons of wheat to alleviate famine.

[3] Mr Casey's name, with that of Lord Moyne, was added in manuscript to a typed list of names which Mr Turnbull submitted to Mr Amery on 5 November. The names on the typed list had been suggested, with those of Lord Wakehurst and Mr Lawson, as possible candidates for the Governorship of Bengal in Mr Amery's minute to Mr Churchill No. P. 36/43 of 27 September. L/PO/8/31.

210

Mr Churchill to Mr Casey (via Foreign Office)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 152

IMPORTANT *7 November 1943, 12.35 am*
MOST SECRET
DE[CIPHER] YOU[RSELF]
No. 3464. NOCOP. Following personal and private for Minister of State from Prime Minister.

The Governorship of Bengal is vacant. The post is one of high importance on account of the war and the famine. The appointment is for five years. In view of the fact that the Office of Minister of State in the Middle East is inevitably diminishing in importance through the general development of the war I should like to know whether Bengal would be agreeable to you. The Secretary of State for India suggested this to me as he is very anxious to make this appointment of distinction. In case you should decide to go to India and in view of your services to us in the Middle East I could submit your name to the King for a peerage of the United Kingdom if that were agreeable to you. Your successor at Cairo will not be of Cabinet rank. In any case no changes will take place until after Sextant.[1] Please however let me know how you feel about it. Every good wish.

[1] The code name given to the Anglo-American-Chinese Conference at Cairo in November 1943 which preceded the opening of the Teheran Conference on November 28.

211

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 151

IMMEDIATE — INDIA OFFICE, *8 November 1943, 4 pm*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

1200. Bengal Governorship. Prime Minister has asked Casey whether he would accept appointment. I think it is doubtful whether he will do so as it would be the end of any further prospects in Australian politics for him, but if he would accept I think he would be an admirable appointment and a new broom.

212

Mr Casey to Mr Churchill (via Foreign Office)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 150

MOST IMMEDIATE — CAIRO, *8 November 1943, 11.55 pm*

PERSONAL AND SECRET — *Received: 9 November, 12.30 am*

No. 2527. Following for Prime Minister from Minister of State.

MOST SECRET

I am most grateful to you for your kind suggestion[1] about the Governorship of Bengal. I am honoured that you should have thought of me for the post. I am anxious to do anything that may be of service to the war effort. My difficulty is that I believe that there is an obligation on me to go back to Australia when the war is over, and, with my friends, do whatever I can towards getting Australian politics and policies back on to the rails. The prospect from the personal point of view is not an alluring one but I believe I should do it. However, I feel that I have some contribution to make on the (grp. undec: ? American) [? Australian] side as well as on the British. The present Australian Government has three years life and may be expected to run its term. If I went to Bengal for five years, I would miss the next Australian election.

Also you are generous enough to suggest a peerage. I am afraid this would make it practically impossible for me to contest a seat in the Australian Parliament. Even a Knighthood would much reduce my chances in my very democratic country. The suggestion that my name should be put forward for a Knighthood has been made to me on several past occasions but with the above

in mind I have thought it best to conserve what political usefulness I might have by remaining as I am.

These considerations combine to make me believe that if the term must be five years or if a peerage or a Knighthood is believed essential I would have to ask you to allow me to decline. I do not know whether if some public recognition is thought necessary to avoid misapprehension, it would be possible, and suitable from the Indian point of view, for me to be made say a Companion of Honour. If you would agree to my taking this post as a war task and without an honour or even a title then I would be honoured to do so.

[1] See No. 210.

213

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *8 November 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 21st October.[1] I certainly agree that this weekly correspondence should continue. I shall try in each of my letters to give you some account of my activities during the week and of my plans for the immediate future.

2. When my last letter[2] was written, I was still busy with the National Defence Council which met on the morning of 1st November and ended shortly after noon on 3rd November. Since then, I have been busy with the ordinary Viceregal routine in New Delhi, and although I am still—and am likely to remain—preoccupied by the food problem, I am beginning to learn something about all the Central Departments. There was an Executive Council meeting on Thursday, 4th November.

3. The meeting of the National Defence Council was, I think, a success. Officials tend to regard the Council as a nuisance and waste of time. I used to address the Council regularly as Commander-in-Chief, and, after presiding over it for three days as Viceroy, see no reason to accept the official view. In this country secret sessions of the Legislature, of the kind common with you, are out of the question, and there is definite, though limited, value in a body of influential people to whom a certain amount of inside information can be communicated, and who can say what they think without having to play to the gallery. The results are a steadying of small but important sections of public

[1] No. 183. [2] No. 199.

opinion, and an occasional pointer to something requiring attention by Government. There is also perhaps some advantage in getting Ruling Princes and Provincial Representatives round the same table—as you probably know the Princes sit with the other members and are not given any special treatment. I certainly feel at present that Linlithgow's conception of the Council and its usefulness was quite right, in spite of the difficulty of maintaining interest in the proceedings of a purely consultative body. The Service reviews of the War (given by the Commander-in-Chief or his Deputy, the A.O.C.-in-C., and the F.O.C., R.I.N.) are always heard with attention, and there is usually at least one other subject—at present food—on which the members have strong views.

4. The food situation is still the main thing on my mind. Your debate[3] seems to have gone well, though from the reports in the Press here I judge that, like myself, you are much handicapped by the lack of clear and reliable information.

In Bengal the Army got going with commendable speed, and you have been informed by telegram[4] of what has been accomplished so far. Auchinleck, who was on tour when I visited Bengal, stopped for two days in Calcutta on his way back, and settled the arrangements himself with Rutherford and Mayne. Mayne, as G.O.C.-in-C., Eastern Command, is in general charge of the military aid to the Bengal Government, and is Chief Liaison Officer with the Bengal Government. Wakely is Director of Movements, Civil Supplies, and is responsible, under the Bengal Government, for the movement of foodgrains from Calcutta to the main distributing centres in the eight or ten badly affected districts. He has taken over the small staff formerly working under Stevens (Civil Supplies Commissioner, Bengal), and has been given a staff of military officers in addition. According to Mayne he is working most amicably with Stevens, who makes available the supplies to be moved, and has already increased the outward flow from 900 to 2,000 tons a day. The main distributing centres cannot at present handle 2,000 tons a day, and dumps are being established to take the immediate surplus.

From the main distributing centres in the districts Stuart (Major-General on L. of C. duties in Bengal) takes over, with the additional troops now being provided. His responsibility is to move the foodgrains onward to the consumption points—that is, the relief centres or kitchens—and to see that the consignments actually reach the people for whom they are intended. Battalion headquarters will normally be with the District Magistrates, and Companies or Platoons will be detached to work with the Sub-Divisional Officers, finding small escorts and patrols as required. The wheeled transport will be used mostly west of Calcutta; elsewhere movement will have to be largely by boat.

Stuart is to see that such medical relief as can be arranged is given to the people. Auchinleck has been able to release some medical units, including a

Casualty Clearing Station, for work in Bengal, and this is good, as far as it goes. But as I shall try to show below, medical relief will be one of our major problems.

The additional troops (nine battalions, with a total strength of about 8,000 men) have not yet arrived, but Stuart has made a start with such troops as he has and with improvised transport.

5. So much for the Army's plans. The actual situation is still most unsatisfactory. The Bengal Government duly made a start with the removal of the Calcutta destitutes to camps, but the long delay in acting seems to have made the people difficult to deal with, and Fazlul Huq at once came out with accusations of rough handling and callousness. These accusations have been taken up by the Hindu Press, and even by the *Statesman* . . .[5] I have had no report from Rutherford, and it is possible that the subordinates employed by the Bengal Government have been tactless. On the other hand it is so obviously necessary to get the destitutes under proper supervision, that the attacks on the Bengal Government are obviously dictated by political rancour.

On the afternoon of Sunday, 7th November, Auchinleck and Mayne (who had just come up from Calcutta) came to see me, and I had Hutchings in to meet them. Mayne gave me a most gloomy account of Bengal affairs. He began by describing his organisation (see paragraph 4 above) which seems to me quite on the right lines. He then said that while the Chief Minister welcomes military aid, and while Suhrawardy, though extremely talkative, does not oppose it, there is a feeling of hopelessness and frustration among some of the senior officials. Martin, the Relief Commissioner (whom I did not meet in Calcutta as Rutherford did not wish to recall him from an important tour) told Mayne that the Bengal administration was a mass of corruption and dishonesty from top to bottom, and that the pilfering and misappropriation of foodgrains were now on such a scale as to make relief measures largely ineffective. He added that Mayne could quote his opinion if he liked, and that he saw no remedy, even the Army could do nothing. It was impossible for the Executive to instruct the courts to impose adequate penalties, and if small fines failed to act as a deterrent, nothing could be done.

Worse still, Mayne indicated that the Bengal Government had neglected medical relief, and that sickness was likely to be a more intractable problem than famine. I had my doubts about the medical organisation while I was in Calcutta, and on my return I ordered Hance (D.G., I.M.S.) to go there immediately. Mayne had seen him, and also Cotter (Public Health Commissioner) who had, I gather, gone to Calcutta without being told to do so. Paton (Surgeon-General, Bengal) had only just returned from two months' sick leave during which, according to Mayne, there were no effective arrange-

[3] See No. 209, note 1. [4] No. 200. [5] Personal comment omitted.

ments for the performance of his duties. The opinion of these medical authorities, and of the army doctors consulted by Mayne, is that the incidence of cholera is well above normal now; that it will reach its peak in December; and that the number of cases may be unmanageable—50,000 a week was the figure mentioned. The main needs are Medical and Health Officers, and subordinate personnel to help them, and a mass campaign of cholera inoculations. Paton told Mayne that he had only 6,200 civil hospital beds in the whole province (outside Calcutta, I presume). If this figure is correct the number is terribly inadequate. Cholera epidemics are, of course, dealt with by special emergency methods, and one would not contemplate the establishment of regular hospitals for cholera patients, but in Mayne's view the men and equipment available are quite inadequate for present needs. Paton is trying to get 50 fully qualified doctors from the army for health work, and 250 Sub-Assistant Surgeons, and 500 Health Assistants from local sources to work under them. The Health Assistants are non-technical subordinates who can be entrusted with elementary duties of sanitary inspection and so on.

In Mayne's opinion the Bengal authorities have shown little imagination or energy in getting the drugs they require. There has, according to him, been no attempt at local procurement, and there seems to have been no approach to the Central Government for help. Hance, Cotter, and one of Hance's staff officers now have this matter in hand. Auchinleck and Mayne made it clear that we must not, in dealing with the Press and the public, give the impression that the army can provide more than a fraction of the medical relief required.

Finally Mayne expressed the gravest doubts about Rutherford's grip on the situation and determination to deal with it. Rutherford expressed surprise at Mayne's anxiety about the general situation, and said that he thought much too much was being made of it. He then retired to Darjeeling for a rest, and Hance has had to follow him there for consultation. When I was in Calcutta, he mentioned to me his wish to go to Darjeeling for a few days rest. As he was obviously not pulling his weight, I told him he could go as soon as he was satisfied that the measures I had initiated were in train. He said he had had no leave since he was appointed to Bihar. My confidence in Rutherford had already been shaken by his apparent reluctance to use the Supply Department officers referred to in paragraph 5 of my last letter. I am quite clear that we must have a first-class man in Bengal as soon as possible.

6. I telegraphed the substance of Mayne's report to you on the evening of 7th November,[6] making it clear that the appreciation was Mayne's and that the facts have still to be examined in greater detail. I have called for a report about the possibility of having people who pilfer or misappropriate foodgrains tried by special tribunals. I am also getting an official appreciation of the state of medical relief and of the immediate requirements.

7. The Provinces other than Bengal and the States seem to be managing their food economy adequately. The Press do not seem satisfied about Orissa, though Lewis has not yet told me about anything is [*sic*] seriously wrong. His view is that Parlakimedi has shown a good deal of courage, and that the Press criticisms are largely a political "stunt". There is distress in Cochin and Travancore, and C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has his critics. But on the whole the various Governments seem to be holding their own. The recent cyclone in Madras was worse than was at first supposed, but will not, I hope, affect the general position.

The Punjab is going to be my worst difficulty. I doubt if the Punjab Ministers are the villains they are sometimes represented to be. In the matter of food, and perhaps in other matters, Chhotu Ram is the strong man. He has a very limited outlook, and is fanatically convinced of his mission to increase the prosperity of the Punjabi farmer. He and his colleagues can point to confusion and lack of consideration both at the Centre and in the other provinces. Our Central food policy has been so hand to mouth that inconsistencies and apparent discourtesies have been unavoidable. Bengal is alleged to have made large profits on Punjab wheat, and the United Provinces wheat prices have been considerably higher than Punjab prices. Hutchings is patiently examining and rectifying these and other anomalies as quickly as he can, but in the meantime the Punjab Ministry—intensely bitter at being pilloried as a set of Shylocks[7]—are casting them in our teeth, and are doing all they can to commit themselves irrevocably to non-co-operation with us. They do not see that food is a world issue, and that it is not enough to work—more or less—up to an arbitrary export quota. Nothing short of a food administration reaching right down to the villages and gradually effecting a monopoly, statutory price control, and rationing in the large towns, will do. Glancy's political training inclines him, I am told, to be the Punjab Ministry's advocate with me rather than my advocate with the Punjab Ministry. I will see what I can do with him when he is here for the Governors' meeting on 19th and 20th November. I shall go to the Punjab and N.-W.F.P. on the 24th November.

8. Compared with food, other matters are not very significant at the moment. You suggest that the principles of the Swiss Constitution might be given a trial in Bengal. I see no present hope of success in this. One of the worst features in the situation is the reckless way in which political capital is made of the Bengal trouble, and party feeling is so high that a coalition simply would not work. Moreover, the present Bengal Ministry has a substantial majority in the Legislature, and the Ministers are, I believe, as competent a lot as we are likely to get. Coupland's theories have had a mixed reception. The Muslims regard them as a sign of grace. The Hindus reject them entirely, and at least one

6 In tel. 2451–S. L/PO/10/17.

7 The money lender in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*.

newspaper and a leading Editor with whom I had a talk have expressed their ardent admiration for the British system, i.e. the counting of heads.

There is little serious political discussion in the Press. Sastri's open letters[8] evoked some comment, and almost every editorial ends with the suggestion that the release of the Congress leaders and frank discussions are a panacea for all ills and discontents. Mody and N. R. Sarker have just issued a joint statement[9] pressing me to make a political move. But I doubt if anybody really expects such a move at present. I have seen few political visitors—Sreenivasan, Editor of the *Hindu* is the most important, and I declined to be pumped by him. In a subsequent conversation with Jenkins he displayed bitter hostility to Jinnah and all his works.

9. The Executive Council agreed on the 4th November to delegate to the Supreme Commander, South-East Asia, the powers of the Commander-in-Chief to the extent required. There was no discussion and I am sure I was right to insist on the circulation of all the documents. The existence of a memorandum by Winston, and of the connected directive to the Commander-in-Chief,[10] could hardly have been concealed. Complete disclosure involved no serious risks and removed all possibility of suspicion.

10. I have not yet made up my mind about the two impending vacancies in the Executive Council. I am almost certain that Twynam must succeed Maxwell. In the Finance Membership, I feel I should like to appoint an Indian, as they have got to learn to manage their own finances sooner or later. Mudaliar is the only one I can see for the post at present; but he would have to be supported by an official of something like the present Finance Member's standing. If an Indian is not appointed and in the absence of a first-class appointment from home, it may be best for the time being to extend Raisman. Raisman has been concerned with our War finance from the first, and while a first-class man from the Treasury might be an improvement, a political chief underpinned by one of Raisman's present subordinates might be the reverse. I hope to telegraph to you about this before very long.

11. I have told the External Affairs Department to take up again the elevation of Bajpai to Ministerial status, and have asked you to make the future correspondence official. I am consulting the Department about Bajpai's expenses, and will go into the matter with Raisman in due course. . . .

[The last sentence of para. 11, containing personal comments; para. 12, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy; and para. 13, on the proposed extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, omitted.]

14. My immediate programme, as far as I can now foresee it, is as follows. I preside at the Governors' meeting on 19th and 20th November. You may be interested in the papers[11] circulated for the meeting, of which I enclose a copy.

You will see that I am making a start on Post-War Reconstruction—a difficult task with finance so very uncertain. I will let you have a copy of the proceedings in due course. On the 24th November I fly to Lahore, and on 27th fly on to Peshawar. At both places I shall be concerned mainly with food. I return to New Delhi on 30th November, and shall probably address a meeting of Residents on 6th December. I leave New Delhi again on 11th December for Cuttack, Shillong, and Calcutta, returning on 21st December. Food will again be the main item to be considered, but at Calcutta I hope to address the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce on 20th December.

[Para. 15, on lack of news on Sir J. Herbert's condition; and para. 16, on a proposal to transfer control of the Persia and Iraq Command to New Delhi, omitted.]

[8] Mr Srinivasa Sastri's open letters of 24 October to Mr Amery, Lord Wavell and Mr Gandhi urged them to help solve the Indian deadlock.

[9] This statement, which appeared in the Indian Press on 8 November, called for the release of the Congress leaders followed by the formation of a national government on the basis of the principles of the Cripps Offer.

[10] L/WS/1/1273: ff 102–7. [11] Nos. 197 and 198.

214

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 300

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *9 November 1943, 11.10 pm*
PERSONAL *Received: 9 November, 9 pm*

2463–S. A Bengal member tabled resolution for the current session of Central Assembly recommending appointment by Governor-General in Council of Committee to enquire into the causes of Bengal famine effectiveness of preventive and remedial measures suitability of administrative organisation in charge of famine zone and adequacy or otherwise of relief measures. Resolution was included in business for 9th November and routine decision was taken to oppose it.

2. On November 8th European group tabled two amendments recommending appointment of "Royal Commission or Judicial Committee" latter to be presided over by High Court Judge and extension of terms of reference to include accuracy or otherwise of mortality statistics steps taken to counteract or mitigate effects of starvation and malnutrition in children and measures to prevent recurrence. Third amendment proposed by member of Moslem League who may however be acting independently recommended Royal Commission

on general food situation with administrative reference to Bengal and possibility of improving distribution and price control. (? In) conversation with Food Secretary European Group stated they did not think immediate enquiry essential but would press for constructive enquiry as soon as conditions permitted.

3. As we were faced with unanimous demand for enquiry from non-official elements in Assembly matter was taken in Council on the eighth evening. Council decided: *First* that immediate enquiry would divert Ministerial and official attention from far more urgent work and would be disastrous even if competent personnel to conduct it could be spared, and that resolution and amendments must be opposed; and *second* that opposition must be coupled with clear indication that we are not opposed in principle to enquiry.

Opinion on second was divided some members urging that undertaking to consider possibility of enquiry would suffice and others that definite undertaking to hold enquiry at appropriate time must be given. Majority favoured definite undertaking and this was final sense of meeting. It is agreed that Food Member should endeavour to settle form of words which would ensure co-operation of European Group and should discuss further with me before resolution came on.

4. Food Member this morning (corrupt group) withdrawal of resolution and amendments by promising three days instead of two discussion on food. Dates uncertain but probably 12, 15 and 16th November. As enquiry will inevitably be urged during discussion we have still to be clear as to our line.

5. (? On) decision of Council it would be necessary if forced into the open to refuse immediate enquiry on grounds:—(a) that adequate body could not be constituted in war time; (b) that effect on morale of services and communal relations would be disastrous; (c) that scope of enquiry cannot be determined while we are still dealing with crisis.

But we should at the same time have to accept principle of enquiry with reservation that time, terms of reference and composition of enquiring body would have to be considered later and that appointment of Royal Commission would be a matter for H.M.G. We should also stress view that enquiry must be constructive and devoted to preventing recurrence of famine, curing effects of malnutrition and improving economic conditions rather than to allocation of responsibility for alleged administrative failures.

6. I shall mention matter in Council again and ensure that we do not commit ourselves unnecessarily. I will keep you informed of developments.

215

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 299

PRIVATE *9 November 1943*

2464–S. My immediately preceding telegram. My own view was and is that enquiry now would be disastrous and that enquiry at future date is undesirable. Council agreed with one dissentient about immediate enquiry. But majority, including Chief and Benthall, held that we could not decline to hold enquiry ourselves or to recommend H.M.G. to appoint Commission when crisis is over without appearing indifferent to the very real concern of all parties and communities about breakdown of Bengal administration and danger of recurrence. With one exception members who did not go so far thought we must undertake to enquire in our own time which amounts in practice to much the same thing.

2. I can overrule my Council on ground that interests of Bengal are essentially affected. But had resolution been moved to-day I should certainly not have done so because case for enquiry is not limited to alleged administration failure but extends to broad economic issues and feeling is so unanimous and strong that I should not be on good ground in disregarding it.

216

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 301

INDIA OFFICE, *9 November 1943, 6.45 pm*

25701. Mayor of Calcutta[1] has sent to Private Secretary to King telegram repeated in my next telegram. Wardlaw-Milne has been pressing[2] in the House for an enquiry after the present food situation is over. I have remained non-committal but do not wish to close the door to this possibility entirely. Suggest if you agree that you convey acknowledgment to Mayor of Calcutta on behalf of King's Private Secretary, adding if you see fit that matter has been referred to me as Minister responsible. I should then take no further action. We need, however, I think, to consider whether an enquiry would be advisable later as pressure for this may develop, and might I suppose even be asked for by Provincial Government.

[1] Mr Syed Badrudduja.

[2] See *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 392, 12 October 1943, col. 715.

217

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 302

EN CLAIR INDIA OFFICE, *9 November 1943, 7 pm*

25702. Following is Mayor of Calcutta's telegram.

Begins. On behalf of the Members of the Corporation of Calcutta I appeal to His Majesty the King-Emperor to appoint a Royal Commission to investigate the causes that led to the famine in Bengal causing death of thousands of men women and children in the Province. *Ends.*

218

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/31: f 149

INDIA OFFICE, *9 November 1943*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 50/43

Prime Minister

With reference to Casey's reply[1] about Bengal, there is no difficulty about a shorter tenure than 5 years. The 5-year period is conventional and Governors hold office during Pleasure. Wavell has said[2] that if he can get a first class man he would not object to a shorter period, but I think myself that it would be a pity to appoint anyone for less than three years.

As regards honours, it has been the invariable custom for Governors of Indian Provinces to be knighted ever since the 80's of last century and Presidency Governors are always given the G.C.I.E. I don't think we ought to let custom stand in the way, but before you finally decide, I should like to ask Wavell whether he thinks there would be any considerable objection to Casey holding office without being knighted. What I have in mind is that loyal Indians might regard it as derogatory to the Crown that a Governor should have declined a high honour which is always given. The Congress, of course, makes a point of its members not accepting honours from the Crown.

L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 212. [2] No. 192.

219

War Cabinet W.M. (43) 152nd Conclusions, Minute 2

R/30/1/4: ff 107–10

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 10 November 1943 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Field Marshal J. C. Smuts

Also present during discussion of item 2 were: Lord Beaverbrook, Mr Amery, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Leathers, Lord Woolton, Mr Richard Law, Lord Cherwell, Mr Harcourt Johnstone

SHIPPING

Indian Grain requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 131st Conclusions, Minute 1)[1]

On the 24th September the War Cabinet had authorised the shipment of up to 200,000 tons of food grains to India by the end of 1943 and had agreed that the position should be reviewed again at the end of the year in the light of the Indian harvests.

The War Cabinet now had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (43) 504)[2] suggesting that further review could not be postponed until the end of the year.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that the food situation in India gave cause for grave anxiety. The Indian rice harvest would not reach the market until January; and, to support the efforts which were being made to draw a substantial proportion of it into Government hands, it was important that in the meantime imports of food grains should continue steadily. If a decision regarding further imports were delayed until the end of the year, there would be a dangerous interruption in the flow of supplies. The Government of India took the view[3] that the minimum required to give them a fighting chance of extracting supplies from cultivators and restoring confidence was an assurance that an import of 50,000 tons of food grains per month would be maintained for a year. In view of the shipping difficulties, the Secretary of State was not prepared to press the War Cabinet to commit themselves to a long-term programme of this kind; but he did think it essential that arrangements should be made to ship to India from Australia (i) a further 50,000 tons of wheat before the end of 1943, in addition to the shipments already authorised; and (ii) another 100,000 tons of wheat in January/February 1944.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that it would be impracticable to

[1] No. 139. [2] No. 207. [3] No. 203.

provide shipping for any additional shipments of wheat from Australia to India in the remaining months of 1943. In the first two months of 1944, however, it should be possible to ship up to 100,000 tons, though this would be at the expense of replenishing the stocks in the Middle East.

"X" The view of the War Cabinet was that an assurance might now be given to the Government of India that arrangements would be made to ship up to 100,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India during the first two months of 1944. It should, however, be made clear that this did not imply any promise to undertake a long-term programme of shipping food grains to India at the rate of 50,000 tons a month.

Canadian Offer of wheat for India

(Previous Reference W.M. (43) 149th Conclusions, Minute 3)[4]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that he had received that day a telegram[5] indicating that the Canadian Government could make available one 10,000-ton Canadian ship for carrying to India part of the Canadian offer of 100,000 tons of wheat.

The War Cabinet were informed that, if this Canadian ship were made available for this purpose, it would be withdrawn from the pool of shipping available for Anglo-American war purposes. In these circumstances the War Cabinet decided that, in view of their decision of the 2nd November regarding the Canadian offer of wheat for India, they must press the Canadian Government not to use this ship for a purpose which they regarded as wholly uneconomic from the shipping point of view.

The War Cabinet—

(1) Invited the Minister of War Transport to arrange for the shipment of up to 100,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India in the first two months of 1944.

(2) Authorised the Secretary of State for India to communicate this decision to the Government of India in the terms indicated at "X" above.

(3) Invited the Prime Minister to send a personal message to the Prime Minister of Canada deprecating the proposed allocation of a Canadian ship to carry to India part of the Canadian offer of 100,000 tons of wheat. The Minister of War Transport undertook to furnish a draft which might serve as a basis for the Prime Minister's message.

(4) Took note, with approval, of the terms of the reply which the Secretary of State for India proposed to give to a Parliamentary Question on the following day[6] asking whether shipping would be made available to convey to India the wheat and milk which had been offered by the Canadian and South African Governments respectively.

[4] Not printed. [5] See No. 203, note 2.

[6] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 393, 11 November 1943, cols. 1278–9.

220

Sir J. Anderson to Mr Amery

L/PO/2/16: f 1

TREASURY CHAMBERS, WHITEHALL, S.W.1, *10 November 1943*

My dear Leo,

I agree with the view in your letter[1] that the problem of India's sterling balances is essentially the same as that which may arise between us and any country with which we have a fixed exchange and in which we have a large necessary war expenditure, thus creating dangers of serious inflation.

But the Indian problem can be distinguished from that of the other countries by the size of the sterling balances, and also by the responsibility we share with the Government of India for coping with inflation.

The Indian sterling balances problem is the only one, so far as we can see at present, which might confront us at the end of the war with a situation comparable to that of the war debts with the U.S.A.

As regards inflation, I do not want to go over the whole subject again, for I think you don't really dissent from the view of other members of the Committee that the Government of India has been perhaps rather slow to recognise what is happening and rather timid in its action. This has been short-sighted in relation to India's own interests and the results are unfortunate for us as well as them.

Yours ever,

JOHN ANDERSON

[1] No. 202.

221

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 295

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *11 November 1943, 2.50 pm*

Received: 11 November, 2.45 pm

2473–S. Your telegram 25701[1] November 9th. Am communicating acknowledgement to Mayor of Calcutta as proposed.

2. See my telegram 2463–S[2] November 9th on demand for enquiry. It is now certain that demand will be renewed in forthcoming debate and Council decided yesterday to take the line already approved for resolution withdrawn by European group.

[1] No. 216. [2] No. 214.

222

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: ff 296–8

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 November 1943, 2.45 pm*

PERSONAL

25879. Your 2463–S.[1] I agree that we must refuse an immediate enquiry with wide terms and that grounds (a) and (b) in your para. 5 can suitably be used in debate. I am unwilling to say anything at present stage which might be construed as committing us to such an enquiry as soon as famine crisis is over or within measurable time thereafter, and for that reason should avoid your (c). Consideration which will be present to you though we may not wish to use it in public is that unless its terms of reference were restricted to a degree that would evoke protest enquiry could not fail to be brought into close contact with strategical and other military questions, many of them involving S.E.A.C. and I doubt if any enquiring body could be set up which could be so composed as both to satisfy Indian opinion and also be allowed freely to explore questions of this kind in war time. You will no doubt consider whether you cannot to some extent use argument that you have just had enquiry covering some of the ground in shape of the Gregory Committee and that your Government is still engaged in considering its recommendations, and you may wish to expand ground (a) by reference to diversion of attention of persons busily engaged on war tasks, *vide* Council decision quoted in para. 3 of your 2463.

2. I agree that it is hardly possible from tactical standpoint to refuse outright any enquiry at any stage although enquiry wherever held and whatever its terms can hardly fail to be opportunity for much communal recrimination as well as attacks on H.M.G. (Another ground for not having enquiry during the war is that these would have undesirable reactions on war effort.) Nevertheless I have hopes that you may find it possible without finally rejecting idea of enquiry in principle at least to avoid any definite commitment. If you are pressed you might consider possibility of offering, as war time expedient which would do no harm even if pursued now, prospect of investigation by one or two experts into relation between growth of population and available supplies of food grains. This might at least answer the point about indifference to possible danger of recurrence.

3. I assume that even if an enquiry has to be promised for the future, its composition and terms of reference could in any case be held over for later consideration. *Prima facie* I see strong reason for deprecating form of Royal Commission though I am not sure that any other legitimate form could be

found since Act of 1935 for enquiry investigating the working of provincial Governments. This is another reason for trying to defer action. If any general remarks have to be made about what should be scope of any eventual enquiry, I agree that emphasis should be on constructive aim and there should be no prospect that terms should include search for scapegoats, but experience shows that enquiring bodies never consider themselves debarred from this exercise.

[1] No. 214.

223

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 144

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 November 1943, 7.30 pm*

PRIVATE

25947. Superintendent Series. Person mentioned in my private and personal 1200[1] of 8th November has replied that he would be willing provided he would not have to stay full five years and need not be made peer or knighted. He does not want to accept any title which would damage his prospects in his home politics or commit himself to full five-year period which would involve missing next election there.

2. I should be glad to know urgently if you would see any strong objection to departure from the long standing custom in the matter of honour. Some high decoration such as C.H. might be conferred but even so it seems possible that many Indians might misinterpret reasons for this departure.

[1] No. 211.

224

Minute by Mr Churchill

L/PO/8/31: f 148

10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, *11 November 1943*

Reference: S. of S. for India's minute of 9.11.43 Serial No. P. 50/43[1]

"I will talk it all over with him.[2]

W. S. C."

[1] No. 218. [2] Evidently Mr Casey; see No. 226, para. 5, last sentence.

225

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 139

PRIVATE *12 November 1943, 10.25 pm*

SECRET

IMMEDIATE

2491–S. Your private telegram No. 25947[1] dated 11th November. Bengal Governorship. Am delighted Casey is willing and agree he need not stay full five years. There is no repeat no need whatever for any honour or title. Casey's standing is well known and departure from custom will not repeat not be misinterpreted.

2. Please send the following message to Casey from me as soon as you think proper. *Begins* Am delighted that you have accepted Bengal. You will find there magnificent opportunity of public service. The sooner you can arrive the better I shall be pleased. *Ends*.

[1] No. 223.

226

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *12 November 1943*

Received: 2 December

I brought up the despatch of additional food to India on Wednesday.[1] Earlier discussion with Leathers convinced me that it was no good asking for a previous commitment to announce 50,000 tons a month for 12 months and that my only hope of getting his support was to concentrate on getting an extra 50,000 each in January and February. So after making it quite clear to the Cabinet that India considered the 600,000 tons over twelve months essential, I pressed, as a minimum, for the 100,000 and got it. I did also urge an additional 50,000 in December, but Leathers said that was impossible. He told me, however, afterwards that if he could get any of the January loadings off earlier he would do so. There may also be a possibility of securing some more barley from Iraq later. Meanwhile, Leathers assures me that all except 10,000 tons of the Iraq barley will be shipped by the end of the year.

2. As for the Canadian wheat, a telegram[2] had just come in from Mackenzie King saying that he was putting 10,000 tons of it on to a ship at Vancouver on the 12th, i.e. today. This also came up at the Cabinet, who felt strongly that in

the present shortage of Canadian–Australian shipping this could not be justified and the Prime Minister has telegraphed to Mackenzie King asking him not to load the ship for India but to return it to the Australian service. I haven't yet heard the result.

3. Judging by the papers, as well as from your telegrams, the situation looks more hopeful and there even seems a prospect, as the rice harvest approaches maturity and looks abundant, of prices coming down. Last year, of course, the crop also I believe looked quite well until it was discovered at the last moment that there was blight in it. I only trust that there will be no such calamity this time, and also that the next Punjab spring crop of wheat will again be a good one.

4. I need not say how greatly interested I was in all you told me in your letter of November 1st[3] of your actual experience in Bengal, including Jenkins' diary of your visit to Contai. I have more than once discussed the Bengal situation with Azizul Haque and read his book *Man behind the Plough*.[4] It is difficult to see what can possibly be done to make any rapid progress even in peace, until the Bengal peasant can be persuaded to realise that a higher standard of living and a smaller family means greater happiness for all concerned.

5. I have telegraphed[5] to you about Casey, who is willing[6] to go to Bengal for at any rate three years, but in view of his political ambitions in Australia doesn't want to take a peerage or even a knighthood. I can see some objections from the point of view of Indians, who feel that nobody is entitled to refuse an honour from the King and who may feel that Casey is doing the same kind of thing as Allah Bakhsh[7] tried to do. I should have thought this could easily be met by saying that in Australia and Canada, just as to some extent here, those who want to take a leading place in the Legislature find it more convenient to remain commoners: Winston himself being an excellent example. Anyhow, I should not myself regard the objection as insuperable. Casey should, I think, fill the bill very well. He has considerable political and diplomatic experience and should know something by now not only of the oriental mind but also of the kind of problems, like inflation, hoarding, &c. with which he will have to cope in Bengal. While perhaps not quite so strong a man as Eric Dudley, I think he could be relied on to be more tactful and perhaps also more co-operative from your point of view. She too is very pleasant and will I think play up. Anyhow, Winston, who is taking wing again,[8] is going to discuss the matter with Casey in the next few days.

[1] No. 219. [2] See No. 203, note 2. [3] No. 199. [4] The Book Co., Calcutta, 1939.
[5] No. 223. [6] See No. 212.
[7] See Vol. III, No. 62, para. 16, No. 69, para. 4 and No. 86, para. 21.
[8] Mr Churchill left Plymouth on 12 November for the Conferences at Cairo and Teheran which had, as their main object, the formulation of plans for the 'Overlord' invasion of Europe in 1944.

6. As regards political developments, it seems pretty obvious that the food situation will dominate everything for the time being. That might possibly be just as well as it may enable the political situation itself to mature and give you more time to look around. Also, from the point of view of the war, the situation may be so much better as to create a more hopeful setting for anything in the nature of what we discussed before you left. I quite realise, by the way, the difficulty of my coming out[9] without raising hopes of some new political move, at any rate under present circumstances. If a situation should arise in which I could come without doing harm, or possibly even do good, you will no doubt let me know. I do feel that in so many ways I should gain enormously by even the briefest contact with the situation on the spot and by a further direct personal talk with you when things have shaped themselves somewhat further.

[Para. 7, on the control of the *Civil and Military Gazette*; and para. 8, on the war situation, omitted.]

9. There has been a minor reshuffle of the Government and a somewhat larger one may take place at the end of the year. I am not sure that there are any eager candidates to fill my place and I can hope pretty confidently that our partnership will not be prematurely broken up.

PS.—I enclose a copy of a little book by C. F. Andrews on the Bihar Earthquake[10] which Miss Harrison has sent me. The markings in it are her own. Andrews was, of course, a devoted friend of Gandhi's and the book is enthusiastic about his work and Prasad's on the occasion of the earthquake. We all know that there is a very different side to both these men, but for all that it might interest you to glance at it.

[9] See No. 194. [10] C. F. Andrews, *The Indian Earthquake* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1935).

227

Secretary of State to Government of India, Food Department

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 105

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *13 November 1943, 1 am*

25996. Your telegram 2415–S[1] of 3rd November. H.M.G. have further considered the shipping for food grains for India. They were informed that it was your view that minimum which would give you a fighting chance as distinct from a good prospect of extracting supplies and restoring confidence is an assurance of 50,000 tons per month for 12 months and authority to make announcement that this has been promised. H.M.G. authorised me to give you an assurance that arrangements will be made to ship up to 100,000 tons of wheat

from Australia to India in the first two months of 1944 in addition to programme already approved and notified to you. They wish me to say, however, that this does not imply any promise to undertake a long term programme of shipping at the rate of 50,000 tons a month.

2. The loading of the additional 100,000 tons of cereals could probably be completed a few weeks earlier than otherwise if you are ready to accept some part of it in Iraqi barley and quantities of barley additional to existing programme of 130,000 tons prove to be available. What are your views?

3. You will doubtless agree that no announcement should be made.

[1] No. 203.

228

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 101

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *13 November 1943, 11.55 pm*
Received: 14 November, 1.15 am

9867. Your telegram of 12th November 25996[1] assurance of 100,000 tons in January and February 1944 is most helpful and we are grateful for your help. We hope that decision on question of continuing at least this rate of supply will not be long delayed.

2. We would much prefer even at risk of some delay to have whole of this quantity in wheat.

3. We shall not make any announcement.

[1] No. 227; the date should be 13 November.

229

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill[1]

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 136

INDIA OFFICE, *15 November 1943*

GRAND . . . . . Following personal and secret for Prime Minister from Secretary of State for India.

Wavell reports[2] Rutherford has been ordered by his doctor to take things easily. He hopes therefore that successor will be chosen and come out with

[1] In sending this telegram to Brigadier Jacob on 15 November for transmission, Mr Turnbull explained that the matter was more urgent than might appear since the person under consideration for the appointment was in Cairo, and Mr Churchill intended to speak to him soon after arrival. L/PO/8/31: f 135.

[2] In tel. 2498–S of 13 November. L/PO/8/31.

minimum delay. Hope therefore you can reach early decision on proposal under consideration. The more I think of it the more I believe it is the right choice.

230

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *16 November 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 3rd November[1] which arrived on the 13th. I am glad you feel that my visit to Bengal did good. It certainly gave me a much clearer idea than I had before of the nature and size of the food problem there.

2. I have spent a quiet but busy week at New Delhi. Food is still my main concern, and I hope that the Army's presence is now being felt in Bengal though the additional troops will not be fully in position for another week or so.

3. I too was disappointed at the decision over Canadian wheat, and I am sorry that owing to a misunderstanding of Mackenzie King's position we put out a communiqué here announcing the gift when in fact the Canadian communiqué had been held up. The Indian communiqué can have done very little harm as it made it quite clear that the gift was subject to the availability of shipping.[2] I felt that it was very important to let educated people here know of Canada's sympathy. All the Dominion Governments are doing their best to help.

4. Rutherford has been advised by his doctor that he is not up to a really hard day's work.[3] I hope that this is not really so, as there is plenty to do in Bihar when his successor arrives. I was very glad indeed to get your telegrams[4] about his successor. It is most important that the new man should arrive in Bengal at the earliest possible date. Rutherford will presumably do his best to carry on in the meantime; but the appointment is not one for an invalid. I was a little surprised that Winston's choice reacted favourably; there will of course be no difficulty whatever about titles and honours. Your comment on Freyberg's brain power is just, but he has a greater determination and ability to get things done than anyone I know, and these qualities are a bigger asset than brains in Bengal at the present time.

5. I am very glad that John Anderson is taking the chairmanship of the Cabinet Committee on Indian Finances so seriously. He is perhaps better qualified than any one else at home (except Linlithgow himself) to appreciate what our difficulties are. Mountbatten came to see me the other day and said he

doubted if we were doing all we could, and felt that perhaps we were overestimating our difficulties. I think that he has been advised by some comparatively junior officers on his Staff and the Americans and does not realise that Linlithgow's representations were fully concurred in not only by the civilian Members of Council best qualified to advise, but by the Commander-in-Chief, and that on the known facts the economic experts at your end have for some months taken a very serious view of the position. With the present trouble about food in Bengal, the evident congestion on the railway system, the falling off in coal production, and the difficulty of keeping essential factories supplied with coal, it is impossible to say with any confidence that India can support her present burdens, let alone taking [take] on new ones. I hope to give Mountbatten a short statement of our views within a few days, and Rowlands, who arrived on 14th November, will be able to help in this. Rowlands is beginning to settle in and will probably be working effectively within a week or so.

[Para. 6, on anti-malaria precautions for air passengers to India, omitted.]

7. My own doings have not been particularly exciting. I have managed to find eight I.C.S. officers to help the Bengal Government run their procurement scheme. Five of these officers are being released by Central Departments, and three (all originally from Bengal) are coming from the Political cadre. The complete procurement scheme of the Bengal Government has not yet been shown to the Executive Council. I understand, however, that the scheme has been approved by the Bengal Government, and that the reduction in the ceiling price for rice which is connected with it was announced by the Bengal Government without reference to the Food Department here. The scheme involves the transfer to the Centre of responsibility for supplying Calcutta (subject to a comparatively small contribution from Bengal); procurement through trade agencies in the rural areas of the Province for the needs of the Defence Services, the provincial reserve, the contribution to Calcutta and the deficit districts; and distribution from the surplus to the deficit districts. I have seen your telegram[5] expressing your doubts about the Bengal Government's intentions, and appreciate your anxiety. I am, however, quite certain that in the time available the Bengal Government could not have organised a complete monopoly, nor even a monopoly to take all rice offering, and that the arrangements for the procurement of this *Aman* crop had therefore to be less satisfactory than with a strong administration. There is also a psychological factor involved. The villager is

[1] No. 205. [2] See No. 209 note 2. [3] See No. 229. [4] Nos. 211 and 223.

[5] 26156 of 13 November. In this telegram, Mr Amery expressed concern that the Bengal procurement scheme might be worked in competition with the trade. In his view, high prices were much the most important element in Bengal's troubles, and a significant difference between Bengal, where there had been real disaster, and other Provinces, where the position had been held, was that in other Provinces procurement schemes had eliminated competition and stabilised prices. L/E/8/3340: ff 200–2.

undoubtedly in an extremely nervous state, probably amounting almost to panic; and attempts at a really thorough wholesale procurement might have a disastrous effect, and lead him to conceal crop; whereas a less drastic procurement may restore confidence. Certainly nothing would be worse than an attempt at wholesale procurement which failed, as it well might. But we must see that the Bengal Government do set up the organisation needed for the effective control of procurement and distribution in future. Detailed work on the procurement scheme should have begun several months ago, but practically nothing was done until after my visit to Calcutta.

8. Except in Bengal, Orissa, Travancore and Cochin, there seems to be no real distress, and I gather that the Madras Government are coping successfully with the effects of a cyclone. I am not entirely happy about Orissa. Lewis tells me in his fortnightly letters[6] that he is satisfied that conditions are not too bad; but it is clear that there have been deaths from starvation and that some of these have been among the residents of Orissa and not among vagrants from the neighbouring districts of Bengal. There has been a good deal in the press about conditions in Orissa, but as I said in paragraph 7 of my last letter the tone of the press reports is due largely to political animosity.

9. At the other end of the food front, exchanges with the Punjab are just beginning. The Ministers were very much hurt by Hailey's references to the Punjab in the House of Lords,[7] and thought that the White Paper[8] had done them gross injustice. Chhotu Ram is particularly sore and complains that he has been treated with "ignominy and ridicule" both here and in London. The Premier's telegram[9] to you showed that he and his colleagues were a little shaken, and it may be useful for them to realise that there is a public opinion outside the Punjab and that world-wide criticism may be very galling. What we want of the Punjab is the establishment of an efficient food administration covering procurement, the rationing of the larger towns, and control of prices. The Ministers will stick both at rationing and price-control; but I have been privately informed that the Premier would accept price-control if he knew that I would force it on him in the absence of agreement. Chhotu Ram thinks rationing in a surplus area quite ridiculous, and price-control unfair to the farmer. There is no doubt about the sincerity of the Ministers and it is of some interest that Hallett's views both on rationing and on price-control differ from those of the Food Department. Hallett favours a modified rationing system in the large towns under which about half the population are provided for on ration cards, and the well-to-do are left to make their own arrangements. He also seems to believe that price-control is futile unless there are large Government stocks and unnecessary if such stocks exist. I believe that I shall be able to overcome Punjab opposition based on alleged profiteering by other Governments and the like, but it will be very difficult indeed to secure willing agreement

on rationing and price-control. The Sind Ministers broke loose a few days ago, and Dow telegraphed[10] that they were likely to abandon the control of wheat prices which has hitherto been extremely effective. On the 15th November, I approved the issue by the Food Department of a direction under Section 126-A of the Constitution Act forbidding any change without the approval of the Central Government.

10. The debate on food in the Assembly began on Friday the 12th November, and continues today and tomorrow. I understand that a fourth day is to be allowed on Thursday the 18th. So far the debate has not been of high quality, and at the end of the first day the position was still confused. The demand for an enquiry is of course being pressed. We are taking the line indicated in my telegram[11] to you on this subject, and I am grateful for your reply[12] showing that you agree generally. An immediate enquiry would, for obvious reasons, be disastrous; but there is a more or less unanimous demand for an enquiry, and after all that has happened in Bengal we cannot reasonably say that no enquiry can be held even when things have returned to normal. The parties are divided on the nature of the enquiry, the Europeans and the Muslim League apparently favouring a Royal Commission, and the Congress pressing for a body appointed here.

11. I noticed the other day that the appreciations of the food position telegraphed to you periodically[13] by the Food Department were anything but informative and did not seem to cover all the ground. I have had this matter taken up, and the Food Department will, I hope, soon produce something better.

12. You must by now have had the first official report[14] from the Department of Education, Health and Lands about the cholera epidemic in Bengal. All concerned have moved fairly fast since my talk with Mayne, and progress will be reported to you officially once a fortnight.[15]

13. I presided at the routine Council meeting on the 10th November. The most controversial item for discussion was a draft Ordinance produced by Maxwell as a substitute for Rule 26 of the Defence of India Rules. The draft gives certain concessions to people detained without trial—they are to be told the substance of the charges against them, and there is to be a six-monthly review of their cases. I am myself doubtful of the wisdom of making these

6 L/P&J/5/233. 7 *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of L., vol. 129, 20 October 1943, cols. 262–70.
8 See No. 182, note 2.
9 Denying the Punjab's lack of co-operation on the food question and explaining the ways in which it was assisting deficit areas. A copy of Khizar Hyat Khan's telegram and Mr Amery's reply is on L/E/8/3348.
10 L/E/8/3311: ff 194–6, 198–9. 11 No. 214. 12 No. 222. 13 L/E/8/3307.
14 L/E/8/4961. 15 See *ibid.*

concessions which might give Provincial Governments and ourselves a great deal of trouble and will probably not satisfy public opinion. With one or two rather surprising exceptions Members of Council were, however, wholly in favour of the principle of the draft, and subject to the settlement of certain details by Maxwell it will certainly be adopted. Like most matters discussed in Council, it has already been the subject of Press comment.

14. The question of retaliation against South Africa will shortly come before Council. I have seen one peculiarly silly proposal to withdraw from South Africans the privileges of European British subjects under the Code of Criminal Procedure. Legislation on these lines would attract publicity and cause a good deal of annoyance in the Union and would mean almost nothing here. A more important proposal concerns trade relations. Whatever the position in peace time may be, I do not see how in war time India can deny her own goods to South Africa or refuse to take South African goods. For example if we were to debar South Africa from taking our jute fabrics, a supply would undoubtedly be given from British sources or from British and American stocks. Conversely if we refused to take South African goods required for the Defence Services here, they would presumably be bought by His Majesty's Government and brought to India as Army property. I intend to have a talk this week with Shafa'at Ahmad Khan who is in India on a visit. His view seems to be more realistic than that of the Members of Council mainly concerned. He thinks that we ought to approach the South African Government on the franchise question and to give them an opportunity of settling with us before we attempt economic sanctions. I shall have to go into the matter further, but it might be a good plan, if negotiations seemed possible, for me to write a personal letter to Smuts.

[Para. 15, on Sir G. S. Bajpai's emoluments, omitted.]

16. In paragraph 8 of your letter of the 21st October[16] you mentioned the matter of new admissions to the Chamber of Princes. You will since have seen Fitze's letter of November the 6th[17] to Gibson in which he says that it has been decided to call a halt to any further enlargement of the Chamber of Princes for some years to come, or at any rate until the future of the small States can be more clearly visualised.

17. I am worried about coal. A situation seems to me to be developing somewhat on the lines of food shortage, i.e. we are not able to produce our requirements and yet we are nibbling at the problem in a rather leisurely and routine manner. I will try to get a move on but I don't feel it is going to be easy.

18. I gave you some idea of my immediate programme in paragraph 14 of my last letter.[18] At present I have nothing to add.

[16] No. 183. [17] L/P&S/13/290: f 82. [18] No. 213.

231

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/512: ff 40–2

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *18 November 1943, 1 am*

PRIVATE

1226. I have reason to believe that when Parliament reassembles on the 23rd amendment to Motion on Address will be moved by certain Conservative Members to the effect that it is regretted no reference was made to the political situation in India and urging that measures should be initiated by Government of India to promote formation of some body of Indians that might make preliminary study of questions which would eventually come under consideration of some Constituent Body. Possible alternative line may be suggestion that Government of India should set up body of experts drawn mainly from outside India, with experience of working of federal constitutions, to make the preliminary study.

2. If Debate proceeds on such lines I should propose to take line that initiative has been passed deliberately by H.M.G. to Indians and it is for them to make use of it. Since 1940 invitations have been held out by H.M.G. to Indians to get together and formulate their own future constitution. It would not be consistent with the undertakings resulting from our declarations that either the Government of India or H.M.G. should make itself responsible for selecting the individuals who should be charged with the task of inquiry, still less for laying down the plan according to which such an inquiry should proceed. On the other hand, if unofficial Indians of position and influence were to set themselves spontaneously to take preliminary steps to find some solution of the constitutional dilemma which would be likely to commend itself generally and so might lead to effective acceptance of our offers, nobody would be better pleased than His Majesty's Government, and they would be prepared to use their good offices in any such way as endeavouring to obtain such expert assistance in the way of eminent jurists with knowledge of federal constitutions and forms of government operative in other countries as any such representative body of Indians might wish. Further, they have no doubt that if such study of the question were located in India the Government of India would be no less happy to afford such facilities as they can at a time when all secretarial staff is very heavily burdened with urgent war work. But I should emphasise that it is not for Government of India to take initiative in framing a plan or any responsibility for its working.

Do you agree to this as the general line to meet this particular suggestion? I have no doubt, however, that the debate will turn mainly on how can Indians

get together while the Congress leaders are detained and on inflation as the cause of famine, etc., arguments I must deal with as best I can.

232

Secretary, Government of India, Home Department to Mr Gandhi

L/P&J/8/623: f 200

NEW DELHI, *18 November 1943*

Sir,

In reply to your letter of October 26th[1] I am directed to say that since there is no change in your attitude towards the Congress resolution of August 8th, 1942, and Government have received no indication that the views of any of the Members of the Working Committee differ from your own, a meeting between you would appear to serve no useful purpose. Both you and they are well aware of the conditions on which such a proposal could be entertained.

I am to add that the other points in your letter have been noted.

I am etc.,

R. TOTTENHAM

[1] No. 188.

233

Minutes of the Governors' Conference, 19–20 November 1943 (Extract)[1]

L/PO/10/21

SECRET

PROCEEDINGS FOR 19TH NOVEMBER 1943

PRESENT

His Excellency the Viceroy.
All Provincial Governors.

IN ATTENDANCE:

P.S.V. acting as Secretary to the Conference.
Sir Theodor Gregory, Economic Adviser to the Government of India.
Mr. R. H. Hutchings, Secretary, Food Department.

INTRODUCTORY

THE VICEROY in opening the Conference said he believed it was the first since 1930, and certainly the first since the passing of the Constitution Act of 1935. The Conference could not take executive decisions; he had himself to consider

his Executive Council, and Governors with Ministries could clearly not encroach upon ministerial authority. On the other hand the Conference might well examine and form general conclusions upon matters of all-India importance for which a common policy was necessary. Food—the first item on the agenda—was a good example. The Central Government and Provincial Governments knew generally what ought to be done, but there were inevitably differences of opinion between Province and Province on matters of detail. The second item on the agenda—Post-War Reconstruction—was another suitable subject for discussion. It might be possible to arrive at a general conception of the features of a sound all-India plan.

Apart from the two main items on the agenda there was a third item intended to give the Viceroy and the Governors an opportunity of discussing or mentioning various minor matters. He would have three or four such matters to mention himself, and some of the Governors would no doubt wish to raise points of their own.

Outside the Conference itself he hoped that Governors would find an opportunity of exchanging ideas and information useful to them.

As regards procedure, he said that he had decided not to bring Governors' Secretaries into the Conference. P.S.V. would keep a note of the proceedings. He would have preferred to confine the Conference to Governors, but thought that both on Food and on Reconstruction information or explanations might be needed which could only be given by officials of the Central Government. He had therefore asked Sir Theodor Gregory and Mr. Hutchings to be present during the discussion on Food, and General Hutton and Mr. Hydari to be present during the discussion on Post-War Reconstruction.

As there were no comments on his opening remarks, the Viceroy said that the Conference would proceed to consider the Memorandum on Food.[2]

* * *

PROCEEDINGS FOR 20TH NOVEMBER 1943

FOOD MEMORANDUM SUMMARY

12. THE VICEROY made the following statement:—

> "Before we go on to Post-War Reconstruction, I should like to sum up what I believe to be the right conclusions on Food. We cannot take any final executive decisions here. But we can get a clear idea of the policy we ought to pursue.

(2) We are all agreed on the general statement of the position set out in paragraphs 1–3 of the Memorandum.

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 23–4 November 1943 from Lord Wavell to Mr Amery. [2] No. 197.

(3) On Information and Statistics I am clear:—

First.—That in all Provinces an immediate and determined effort must be made to build up provincial statistics for market intake, consumption, and stocks of foodgrains. This will need a proper organisation and the strict administration of the Foodgrains Control Order and any supplementary Control Orders made by the Provinces themselves.

Second.—That in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam, where agricultural statistics are defective even by traditional Indian standards, it would not be possible to establish as a short-term policy elaborate land revenue organisations. In these provinces therefore the provincial statistics referred to above must be to a great extent a substitute for, and not a supplement to, agricultural statistics.

Third.—That in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam, immediate steps must be taken to establish or perfect an organisation capable of keeping the district officers informed of what is actually happening. The land revenue organisations in provinces like Madras and the Punjab do not confine themselves to statistics, and district officers must know from day to day the general condition of the people, and receive early information of impending trouble.

Fourth.—That all action must be completed in not much more than three months—say by the end of February.

(4) For production, the main needs are:—

(*a*) Assistance from the Centre in securing equipment for minor irrigation schemes.
(*b*) An increased supply of fertilizers.
(*c*) An increased supply of iron and steel.
(*d*) Complete arrangements for the supply and distribution of improved seed.

I will take up (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) with the Commander-in-Chief and the Members for Education, Health and Lands, and Supply, and also with the Authorities at home, and I shall be obliged if Provinces will as soon as possible place forward demands (covering a year to eighteen months) separately under each of the first three heads on Education, Health and Lands Department, referring where necessary to demands already made. The sooner demands are included in regular programmes which can be watched here the better.

The supply and distribution of improved seed ((*d*) above) is a matter for the Provinces. The Bengal Government should I suggest take immediate action to strengthen its Agricultural Department.

(5) There are several opinions about procurement, but most Governors favour course (*c*) in paragraph 4 (*iii*) of the Memorandum. I see no objection, provided it is understood that we may have to go over to a complete provincial monopoly at any time, and that procurement must be so organised that mono-

poly buying could be undertaken without confusion from 1st April next if need arise.

(6) Distribution and consumption are matters on which Governors hold widely differing opinions. The psychological argument in favour of rationing as recommended by the Foodgrains Policy Committee appears decisive; and apart from this it is impossible for Provinces to follow divergent policies in this matter. I must ask Governors to promote full urban rationing starting with towns with a population exceeding 100,000, and extending the scheme gradually to smaller towns. Preparations should, I think, be completed within three months, or earlier if possible, in provinces where full rationing is not already accepted policy.

(7) On statutory price control *versus* a ceiling price system you have heard what the Finance Member[3] said this morning. Yesterday opinions were sharply divided, and the majority seemed to favour ceiling prices. The successful imposition of statutory price control must be preceded by precisely the same measures as are needed for the successful imposition of ceiling prices. There is therefore no greater administrative difficulty about the former than about the latter. I am clear, in agreement with the Finance Member, that statutory price control is the only means of ensuring that foodgrains are generally available at reasonable prices, and that price differences between Province and Province are not excessive. I hope that the Governors concerned will see that it is imposed as soon as possible, or that their Ministries take steps to impose it. I see no reason why we should not see substantial results within three months. As to the price, attempts to use estimated production costs would be hopeless. A target of from Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 for wheat would, for example, be suitable.

(8) Little was said about propaganda. The Governors of the United Provinces and the Punjab would be glad of the help of the Information and Broadcasting Department, and this will be arranged.

(9) Governors are not entirely satisfied with the Regional Food Commissioners and their work. The Food Department will overhaul this organisation and try to improve it.

(10) No Governor considers a change in the constitutional arrangements necessary except the Governor of Bengal who would place Food in the discretionary field. I suggest that the Governor of Bengal use Section 52-(1) (*a*) of the Constitution Act. He will have the full support of the Secretary of State and myself if he does so. Should Section 52-(1) (*a*) prove insufficient I will consider further the possibility of an amendment. I am confident that my

[3] Although not mentioned in Lord Wavell's introductory remarks on the composition of the Conference, Sir J. Raisman attended the meeting of 20 November at 10 am for the discussion on inflation. See also No. 238, para. 5.

colleagues in the Executive Council will support me in the full use of Section 126-A of the Act in all matters relating to Food economy."

THE GOVERNORS OF MADRAS AND BOMBAY accepted the statement. THE GOVERNOR OF MADRAS said that he was in difficulties about the prices of foodgrains supplied to Madras in replacement of supplies made by Madras to the Army.

THE VICEROY said that this matter would be looked into.

THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY said that he was doubtful about complete monopolies.

THE GOVERNOR OF BENGAL said that the use of Section 52-(1) (*a*) might lead to resignations.

THE VICEROY replied that he was prepared for this. He did not want to lose Ministries, but Food economy was so important that a threat of resignation would not deter him from action.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE UNITED PROVINCES said that the Finance Member's talk had been most valuable, and asked whether a statement on the same lines could not be made available to District Officers.

THE VICEROY said that the substance of the statement would be communicated to Governors, and he would see what information could properly be passed on. Governors would realise that the Finance Member had given them some secret information the dissemination of which might be undesirable.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE PUNJAB said that staple foodgrains other than wheat must be controlled. This was most important in the Punjab.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE CENTRAL PROVINCES said that he would like some general target prices for rice and *jowar*.

THE VICEROY said that he would try to have a general indication given.

THE GOVERNOR OF BIHAR had no comments to make.

THE GOVERNOR OF THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE said that prices should be co-ordinated by the Centre. It was explained that under the orders now in force all new prices required Central approval.

THE GOVERNOR OF SIND agreed with the Governor of the Punjab that prices of foodgrains other than wheat must be fixed. There was a relation between the prices of different foodgrains. The Punjab and Sind should be in line in respect both of wheat and of rice by the earliest possible date. He asked whether the Viceroy's remark about statutory powers was of general application.

THE VICEROY replied that it was.

THE GOVERNOR OF ASSAM agreed with the statement except that he believed that no special new organisation for the collection of information was needed in his province. In any case he did not think any improvement in revenue statistics was possible as a short term policy except at a cost quite disproportionate to the results.

234

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *19 November 1943*
Received: 2 December

Your letter of November 8th[1] just received gives me great encouragement. It is true that you draw a pretty disquieting picture of the Bengal food situation, of the epidemics that may follow, of Rutherford's fade-out, and of the hopeless corruption and inefficiency of the Bengal administration at large; but I do feel that you are really taking hold and that your initiative, both through the Army and through the Governors, will get things into ship-shape condition before it is too late. I thought your memorandum[2] on food to the Governors' Conference admirable and hope the Conference, which I understand is now sitting, will have proved a real success and make each Governor put some personality into the drive in his own Province. You are absolutely right in insisting upon the world character of the food problem. Next year, and still more the year after, there may be a grave world shortage and the only chance, if there is a continuance or recurrence of shortage in India, of the Government here being able and willing to help is if it is convinced that India has put her own house in order and that there is a real absolute shortage and not merely a failure of distribution.

2. As regards the succession to Bengal I have telegraphed[3] on to Winston your unsatisfactory news about Rutherford's health in the hope of getting from him a quick decision about Casey. I can only hope that this Lebanon trouble[4] will not make Winston feel that Casey must stay on the spot, if not for good, at any rate for the next two or three months. It is obviously becoming increasingly important to get the best man out on the spot as quickly as possible.

[1] No. 213. [2] No. 197. [3] No. 229.

[4] In October 1943 the Lebanese government resolved to abolish the French position in the Republic. Early in November, the Free French in Algiers challenged the validity of this act and an expedition was sent to Beirut which secured the arrest of the principal Lebanese ministers on 11 November. Following extensive street rioting in Beirut, Mr Casey was despatched to secure an agreement between the Free French and the Lebanese ministry.

Rutherford is obviously good average, but physically and otherwise not up to such a crisis.

3. I have not telegraphed to you the details about the Canadian wheat position, but Mackenzie King did telegraph that he was loading up one ship at Vancouver on the 12th and was only dissuaded by a strong personal appeal from Winston not to divert the ship from the urgent needs of the Canada–Australia service. In agreeing to this, he has replied that he feels very strongly that at any rate one shipload should go before very long. I must say I hope that he will get his way, and I cannot see that the waste of 10,000 tons of cargo for an extra four or five weeks would not be more than compensated by the psychological effect. Meanwhile, de Valera has got his Dail to vote £100,000 through the Irish Red Cross to Indian famine relief.[5] I can only hope it goes straight to your fund and not to people like Joshi and Mrs. Pandit. In view of these gifts from the Dominions, do you feel yourself that Indian public opinion will make an invidious comparison with the Government here if we do not do something of the same sort and on a reasonably large scale? In one sense, of course, it would be merely an addition to the problem of sterling balances; but in these matters psychology counts so much that I should very much like to know your view. Personally, I regret that I did not at the outset encourage the Lord Mayor to make the biggest possible splash in a general appeal. The result of the rather limited appeal which was issued by him, with myself and the High Commissioner,[6] has been to leave the field open to a variety of other funds, and more particularly Krishna Menon's fund, with Clement Davies as nominal head, which is of course being used to re-established Menon's much weakened position in this country.

4. I am glad to see[7] that you have fended off any question of an immediate enquiry into the famine and hope that any future enquiry will be concentrated on the constructive problem of how to improve the standards of living and of cultivation. Such an enquiry in fact should be made to subserve the purposes of reconstruction rather than of looking for culprits. I gather that that particular hunt went on very merrily during your four or five days' session on the subject, and it is very typical of Jinnah that, while going all out to exonerate the present Bengal Government from blame, he cheerfully throws the whole blame on the shoulders of the Central Government. I see the Assembly also adopted a resolution with regard to price stabilisation. Anything you can do in that direction will of course be invaluable both in its bearing on the food and general internal situation in India and also on the Cabinet situation here with reference to the sterling balance position.

5. Your memorandum[8] to the Governors on reconstruction also gave me great pleasure and encouragement and struck me as admirably balanced. My only query, and that a rather theoretical one, is whether you are altogether right

in putting health before education. It might be said that improved health measures only lead to further multiplication of population without teaching them how to get better value out of their land, whereas it might be better that the population should increase less pending better education. I dare say the real answer is that literary education can wait, and that the important thing is to give practical education both in health matters and in agricultural methods. In this latter connection I was delighted with the scheme for utilising the reconstruction fund for demobilised soldiers. That ought to do a great deal for the men themselves and, by force of example, for all their neighbours and for India generally.

6. I am glad to think that you find the National Defence Council useful. I have always believed in it and felt at the back of my mind that it may one of these days also prove a very useful organ, whether in connection with reconstruction or even with a settlement of the constitutional problem. Meanwhile, it is a great thing that a number of Indians of good standing should feel that they are given the inside of the picture and that they can speak to their fellow citizens with authority. *Izzat* is such a big thing in the East, and the N.D.C., after all, adds something to the *izzat* of every one who attends it. For the same good reason I was very glad that you showed all the papers in connection with the South-East Asia Command to your Executive. I remain convinced that, pending any solution of the party deadlock, it is worth everything strengthening their hands and making them feel that they really are the Government of India.

7. I shall await with interest your suggestions about the Home and Finance Members. I have little doubt that the wisest thing will be in present circumstances to appoint Twynam to the Home Membership. I equally agree with you that to appoint an Indian like Mudaliar—and he seems to me obviously the right man if you do—with no one better than one of Raisman's existing subordinates, would be a mistake. The only thing in that case would be to get a first-class man from here as Mudaliar's technical adviser, so that he could speak with a real grasp of the problem as a whole in the Assembly, and also enable the Treasury here to feel that the situation is being effectively handled. Possibly the best solution might be to get out someone from here with experience of war finance and I have asked Montagu Norman if he can think of anybody. I don't think anyone from the Treasury would be well received in

[5] See L/E/8/3347.

[6] In *The Times* on 21 October 1943, appealing for funds to assist private organisations already distributing free meals or providing milk for children. Mr Amery had decided against a wider appeal in the light of Sir T. Rutherford's advice reported in tel. 2198–S of 13 October that what was needed was food rather than money. L/E/8/3335. See also No. 187, para. 5.

[7] The vote in the Legislative Assembly was reported in *The Times* of 19 November.

[8] No. 198.

view of the discussions that may have to take place with the Treasury over sterling balances presently. There remains, of course, the prolongation of Raisman, if you do not think him too tired or in danger of losing authority.

235

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/512: f 38

22 November 1943

2553–S. Your telegram No. 1226[1] of November 18th. Amendment to motion on address. I agree to line proposed, but suggest you make it clear that to qualify for substantial assistance here unofficial body would have to command the respect of major sections of Indian opinion. If this condition were not satisfied, e.g. if group of eminent Hindus only were to approach me, limited help could be given within present resources of Reforms Department. Secondly, that if detention of Congress leaders is an obstacle to progress (as it is) you regret that this obstacle cannot be removed until the leaders themselves make clear their anxiety to co-operate with the Government.

[1] No. 231.

236

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill (via Air Ministry and Commander-in-Chief, Middle East)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 128

IMMEDIATE *23 November 1943, 3.15 pm*

GRAND NO. 161. Following Secret and Personal for Prime Minister from Secretary of State for India.

I have just received following from Viceroy[1]

Begins.

Appointment and arrival of new Governor of Bengal matter of highest urgency. Poor morale of services and lack of public spirit in population combine to make recovery most difficult and I have *no* assurance that my policy will be energetically enforced. Rutherford is not in good health and I have no confidence in his capacity to deal with Bengal situation. Please impress on Prime Minister my conviction that only immediate appointment of first class man can enable me to do what is needed and that delay is dangerous. *Ends.*

Hope you can reach very early decision.

[1] In tel. 2561–S of 23 November. L/PO/8/31.

237

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/2527: f 38

PRIVATE *23 November 1943*

2562–S. Governors' conference was held 19th and 20th November.[1] Main subjects discussed food and post-war reconstruction. On food, Governors agreed to need for improved statistics, establishment of procurement agencies capable of handling state monopolies if necessary by end of March next, full urban rationing and statutory price control. What can be done in the ministerial provinces remains to be seen and Bengal will be critical problem for some months.

2. Discussion on reconstruction revealed slow progress and lack of liaison with Centre both in industrial and in social and economic field. Steps are being taken to remedy this. Governors favoured priority for economic as opposed to social development.

3. Among minor subjects discussed most important was condition of services. Governors agreed that services stretched to breaking point and reinforcements of experienced men needed especially for economic controls and civil supplies work. Shall probably ask your help about this later.

4. Conference was a success and I propose to make it regular fixture at half-yearly or 9-monthly interval. Proceedings follow by bag.

[1] See No. 233.

238

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *23 November 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have to thank you for two letters, dated the 6th[1] and 10th[2] November, respectively. In the first of these you gave me your general impression of the Indian famine debate in the House of Commons and dealt with several other matters. I am very glad indeed that you have been able to get the War Cabinet to allot another 100,000 tons of foodgrains in January and February. I dealt with the Canadian offer in paragraph 3 of my last letter,[3] and agree with you that the psychological effect has been good. When you wrote you were still

[1] No. 209. [2] Not printed. [3] No. 230.

wondering about the Bengal Governorship. We have exchanged telegrams about this since,[4] and I hoped that an appointment might be announced almost immediately. The delay is dangerous, and yesterday I sent you a telegram[5] stressing the urgency of getting a first class man to Bengal as soon as possible. I am seriously worried about Rutherford and his Government. According to Linlithgow's reports[6] Rutherford started very well and, as my own letters[7] show, I thought him when I visited Bengal a fairly solid man though by no means first class. Since then he has complained of ill-health and seems to have lost heart and to take little active interest in the Bengal problem. His senior officials such as Williams, the Chief Secretary, and Stevens, the Food Commissioner, are lacking in energy, and there are signs that they are not co-operating as well as they should with the Army. I have had considerable difficulty in getting officers back to Bengal, and when they arrive the complaint is that they are hardly given a full day's work. Hance, the D.G.I.M.S., who has just returned from a long tour in Bengal, has sent in a good report[8] which shows very clearly that the Medical and Public Health Services, which were never very efficient, are demoralised, and even with the substantial help the Army are giving it will be most difficult to control cholera and to deal properly with malaria. Unless the Governor of Bengal is a man who is prepared to take the most vigorous action, I can have no assurance that the policy laid down by the Departments here or by me will be carried out. The sooner I have someone on whom I can rely to act vigorously, the better.

2. Your second letter dealt with what you thought to be a lack of co-ordination between G.H.Q. and the Departments here about the propaganda campaign on the Japanese treatment of prisoners of war and the inhabitants of occupied territories. I agree that our proceedings were perhaps not entirely orthodox, but Linlithgow seems to have been in touch with the Commander-in-Chief throughout so that there was no serious lack of liaison.

3. The Assembly debate[9] on Food ended on Thursday the 18th November. The various amendments to the Food Member's resolution were not acceptable, and we decided in Council to speak and vote against them. The European Group made it clear that they were prepared to accept an assurance by Government that there would be an enquiry at the appropriate time but not now; but they developed this idea too late to be able to move a formal amendment embodying it. Srivastava, in winding up the debate, was thus able to say that if the European Group had moved an amendment on the lines indicated by their Leader, the Government of India would have accepted it, but that he could not accept any of the amendments actually moved which proposed an immediate enquiry. The House divided only on one of the amendments, and there was a substantial majority for Government. Thus at the end of the Assembly debate, we were technically committed to nothing, although there

was a private understanding with the European Group that we agreed to an enquiry to be held in our own time. But there was a definite commitment in the Council of State as the representatives of the European Group there moved an amendment[10] on the lines indicated by the Leader of the Group in the Assembly and Srivastava was naturally bound to accept it. Tactically I think we did as well as could be expected in the Legislature; but the fact that we won the divisions in both houses does not indicate any falling off in the feeling about the Bengal famine and its treatment. All parties are very seriously disturbed at what has happened in Bengal and although the blame is apportioned differently in different quarters there is a very general belief that the Government in the widest sense is the culprit.

4. The main event of the week was the Governors' Conference which was held on the 19th and 20th November. All the Governors attended, and the Conference was, I think, a success. We sat nominally for $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours on each of the two days, but actually for 6 hours or more. An uncorrected proof of the proceedings will go with this letter.[11]

5. The first item on the agenda was the food situation. All the Governors agreed that intelligence and statistics need improvement. Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, and apparently Assam are backward in land revenue administration, and the Governors concerned thought that there would be little point in attempting to introduce elaborate land revenue methods during the war. Gregory advised, and the Governors generally agreed, that the right policy would be to concentrate on trade statistics. In the Provinces with advanced land revenue administration, these would supplement the Revenue Department's agricultural figures. In the other Provinces trade statistics would have to be the basis of food policy. Many of the Governors were opposed to monopoly procurement, though some of them thought it would be possible. There was also opposition from Hallett, Glancy, Mudie and Cunningham to full urban rationing.

[4] See Nos. 211, 223, 225 and 229, note 2.
[5] See No. 236, note 1.
[6] See Nos. 109, 129 para. 5, and 146 para. 3.
[7] See Nos. 192, and 199 para. 7.
[8] L/E/8/4961: ff 310–42.
[9] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, Vol. IV, 1943 (Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1943) 12, 15, 16, 17 and 18 November 1943, pp. 196–224, 299–343, 359–401, 446–473 and 495–541.
[10] The amendment read:

> that this House is of opinion that at a suitable date an enquiry should take place to examine the whole question of the food shortage in India and in particular in Bengal. The enquiry should be conducted by a suitable body of the type of a Royal Commission and its personnel should be completely outside the field of Indian politics. Its terms of reference should cover a full examination of the present food shortage and the making of recommendations to prevent the recurrence of the existing distress.

For the report of the Council of State debate see: *The Council of State Debates*, Vol. III, 1943 (Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1944) 19, 20 and 23 November 1943, pp. 91–122, 134–173 and 189–227.
[11] See No. 233, which reproduces extracts from the proceedings as finally approved.

Hallett has devised an ingenious scheme under which about 60 per cent. of the population of his larger towns are rationed on a card system through Government shops, while the remaining 40 per cent. fend for themselves. His idea is that in most large towns in the United Provinces the well-to-do and a fair number of others have village connections, and will feed themselves better if not interfered with. This argument does not really hold water; but the United Provinces system has been energetically developed and could form the basis for a full rationing system. The most controversial matter was statutory price control. Many of the Governors including Hope, Hallett, Twynam, Mudie and Cunningham were in favour of what is called here a "ceiling price" system, which means simply the fixing by executive order of prices for the various foodgrains above which Government will not buy. Dow, who, with good reason, is pleased with his own efforts to make his Ministry introduce rationing in Karachi and maintain price control for wheat at Rs. 8 a maund, pointed out that ceiling prices were not controlled prices at all. Dow's line throughout the Conference was that it was quite impossible for him, working with a Ministry, to continue to follow what he believed to be the policy of the Central Government if the Section 93 Provinces declined to follow it—not to speak of the other Ministerial Provinces. Some of the other Governors did not much relish his attitude, but he seemed to me to talk very good sense. The discussion on food ended on the evening of the first day, and I brought in Raisman on the morning of the second day to speak about inflation and its possible consequences. He made a clear and convincing statement to which full justice is perhaps not done in the minutes. He certainly made the Governors' flesh creep, and after they heard him I believe that many of them were more inclined to agree to the necessity for statutory price control. To wind up the discussion on food I made a statement which is reproduced at pages 27 to 29[12] of the minutes. As you will see all the Governors accepted this though some of them were still doubtful on one or two points.

LAHORE, *24 November 1943*

6. We went on to consider Post-War Reconstruction and found very quickly that the Provinces had done little so far except to start on plans for the resettlement of soldiers on demobilisation. I am quite clear that our Reconstruction Committee at headquarters, though sound enough on paper, have not yet established complete liaison with the Provinces, and that we shall have to devise means of working out a "master plan" for the Centre and the Provinces together, covering the main reconstruction subjects. It will be difficult to do this. In the first place Raisman can give no idea whatever of the Central finance likely to be available, and the Provinces are equally in the dark about their own post-war finances. Secondly, if we attempt to do the business by correspondence the chances are that we shall collect in the Central Secretariat a vast number of plans, all prepared on rather different lines, which it would be almost impossible

to correlate and digest. Twynam proposed a full-dress Industrial Commission to deal with industrial subjects. On education we have already had Sargent's very ambitious memorandum,[13] and, as you know, Jogendra Singh has recently set up a Committee to deal with Public Health and Medical matters. I doubt if a Commission, unless it consisted of first class men, would do very much good, and it would take a long time to submit a report. It may be possible to set up small expert committees, say of two or three men appointed here, with power to co-opt one or two more in each Province, to tour India and to deal separately with subjects such as industrial development, electrical development, irrigation, roads, agricultural improvement, and so on. I have asked the Department concerned for advice as to the best thing to be done. You will be interested to see that the sense of the Conference was that, generally speaking, economic should precede social development. Dow would give a high place to education, but most of the Governors thought that what Hallett described as "the problem of rural poverty" should be tackled first.

7. I took the opportunity of discussing a number of miscellaneous items. The only really important one is I think the question of recruitment to the Services. This matter was brought to my notice in connection with the suspension of recruitment to the I.C.S. and to the Indian Police, and was regarded by the Home Department as a post-war problem. It seems to me to be an immediate problem which involves not merely the two security services, but all the higher Civil Services in the country, both Central and Provincial. The Governors were very strongly of opinion that the Services were now stretched to breaking point, and Bengal is a warning of what may happen if the Services do break down. If I am right in thinking that this is an immediate problem, the recruitment of men in their twenties will not help. The Services will have to be reinforced by experienced men in their thirties or forties who can be given responsible work. The main stresses seem to occur in connection with the administration of war-time controls and civil supply problems at the Centre, and in the civil supplies administration in the Provinces. There is also, I believe, a considerable shortage of engineers, and in some Provinces of doctors. I am trying to have an estimate made of the number of men needed and the Services to which they would be attached. Unless I receive convincing advice to the contrary, I propose to ask His Majesty's Government to find me a certain number of officers to reinforce several of the higher Civil Services. I know I shall be told here that men without Indian experience are of little use. But much of the war-time work of the I.C.S. is novel to the members of that Service and while [the] ideal no doubt would be the employment of men who know both India and the special subject with which they were dealing, there is a good deal to be said, if such men are not available, for the employment of specialists from

[12] i.e. pp. 481–484 in this Vol. [13] See No. 198, note 4.

abroad. We may be able to fill some of the gaps by promotions from the lower services, but we should have to rely mainly on men seconded to us from the Civil Services at home and from the Army. I quite realise that a scheme of this kind can succeed only if His Majesty's Government are convinced that it is necessary for India's economic and administrative stability during the remainder of the war and the first year or two of the peace. Incidentally if we could get short service officers lent to us in this way for temporary appointment in, or attachment to, the Services here, the problem of post-war recruitment to the I.C.S. and the Indian Police might be much eased. It seems to me impossible to reopen regular recruitment to these two Services with the constitutional prospects as they now are, and if we could establish the employment of short service officers as a wartime practice we might be able to continue it after the war until the constitutional future is clearer. I noticed in the *National News Letter* (the successor to King Hall's production) of 4th November a statement that civil servants at home, both permanent and temporary, were being asked to volunteer for appointment in territories liberated from the Nazis. If Home Civil servants can be spared for Europe, it is not unreasonable to ask some of them to volunteer for service in India.

8. You will probably like to have my sizing-up of the Governors as a result of two days conference with them, and I give you my impressions for what they are worth.

I was very favourably surprised by Arthur Hope whom I had rather discounted: he seemed to me to know his Province very well, to be administering it energetically and efficiently, and to talk good horse sense.

I like the look and talk of Colville very much, he admits his lack of knowledge of India but has the character and ability that counts in any situation.

Rutherford confirmed the impression I had formed in Calcutta that he was second-rate, at best; frankly, I do not think he is really trying hard in Bengal now, and the impression he left on me was very poor.

Maurice Hallett I have known for many years; a first class administrator and a man of courage and character, but perhaps a bit disillusioned and cynical about India.

Glancy is good but inclined to go with the tide and not very eager to take a firm line with his Ministers; but he is all right.

I have not quite made up my mind about Twynam, most certainly able, but a little opinionated and inclined to talk for effect.

Mudie is quiet and sensible; hardly the man I should say for a tough job, though.

Cunningham is first-class in North-West Frontier Province, which has comparatively few problems and merely needs a man of character and sense, which Cunningham has.

Lewis is all right for his rather dim Province of Orissa, as long as nothing very startling happens there.

Dow talked more horse sense than any one, though a bit provocative at times; he has Sind well in hand.

Clow reminds me of a remark once made by a very celebrated golf professional, of whom someone had enquired his opinion of one of his professional brethren: "a nice little golfer, Sir, a nice little golfer—you know what I mean". Clow, I think, is "a nice little Governor", but nothing more.

9. I said in my last letter that I was very worried about coal. I presided on the 23rd November at a meeting of the War Resources Committee of Council to consider what should be done. We are attempting to raise and despatch coal at the rate of 25·64 million tons per annum. This is a high target, but not, on the figures submitted to us, unprecedented. In a normal year raisings are good and steady from January to June. From July onwards the labour, largely as you know aboriginal and almost wholly agricultural, attends irregularly and raisings fall off. This year the falling off in raisings has been abnormally high. In the past the difficulty had been to maintain the supply of wagons in the numbers needed to move the coal awaiting despatch. At the moment the trouble is shortage of labour, which is attributed to several abnormal influences. The most important of these is probably the opportunity given for more remunerative work under the Army, open to husbands and wives together. There is also the scarcity of food and the high cost of living even when food is available. Apart from these two factors the incidence of sickness is extremely high. There is a great deal of malaria in Bengal and Bihar this year, and its effects are said to have been aggravated by the food shortage. Coal is at present administered for production and labour by the Labour Department; for distribution by the War Transport Department; and for wagon supply by the Railway Board, who are incidentally large producers. There is a Coal Committee representing the three Departments here and a corresponding Committee in Calcutta on which, however, there is no representative of the Labour Department. The War Resources Committee at an earlier meeting had favoured the appointment of a Fuel Commissioner, and a departmental scheme had been drafted and submitted. When the matter came up on the 23rd it was clear that the Labour and War Transport Members (the latter is also the Railway Member) were against the appointment of a Commissioner, and wanted the present arrangements to continue with some rather nebulous provision for co-ordination. I had seen the members of the Calcutta Coal Committee a few days earlier and was quite satisfied in my own mind that a Coal Commissioner, dealing only with coal and coke and not with other forms of fuel, was needed, and that he should supervise on behalf of the three Departments the working of their local representatives in Calcutta. I reserved judgment, and later informed Ambedkar and Benthall of my view that a Coal

Commissioner was a necessity. The Chief, Raisman and Mudaliar were all really of my own view, though Mudaliar would I think have been satisfied by the appointment of a senior officer to deal with the Labour Department's aspect of coal. I asked Benthall to have a telegram[14] despatched as soon as possible to you asking for the recruitment of a suitable man to fill the post of Coal Commissioner. We cannot find a man in India. I followed this up yesterday with a private telegram[15] so that you may know the importance I attach to this matter. Industries are already beginning to close for lack of coal, and the supply to the railways is precarious. I am convinced that we must get a move on with this subject without delay and that this can be done only if there is one competent man who can keep an eye on progress over the whole field.

10. Another subject mentioned in my last letter was retaliation against South Africa. I saw Shafa'at Ahmad on the 22nd November, and received the impression that his main feeling about the pegging legislation[16] was one of wounded pride. He felt that he had been treated with indifference and even with discourtesy by the South African Government, and while he admitted that retaliation would be useless he thought it inevitable. I have asked him to take back to South Africa for me a private and personal letter to Smuts of which I enclose a copy. I am convinced that the Executive Council are bent on retaliation and that retaliation would be disastrous to India and to Imperial relations after the war. I know the difficulty of Smuts' position, but feel that he should also realise the difficulty of my own. The only hope is the reopening of negotiations on general questions such as the franchise, and until I hear from Smuts I propose to hold up the consideration of the retaliation cases by the Executive Council.

11. I am writing this letter from Lahore where I am attempting to deal with the Punjab end of the food problem. I received yesterday something like an ultimatum from Dow who says, on the whole reasonably, that unless rationing and price control are introduced in the Punjab, he cannot be expected to force his Ministry to introduce rationing in Karachi (the plans for this are ready) or to maintain their price control of wheat. Raisman is emphatically of opinion that if we let control in Sind go there will be an end to our attempts to control inflation. On the other hand the Punjab has so far been absolutely firm in refusing to introduce price control. I shall not attempt to forecast the result of my discussions with the Punjab Government: they began today and will be continued tomorrow. But you will have no difficulty in thinking out for yourself the worst possible position.

[Para. 12, on Sir F. Puckle's memorandum seeking guidance on treatment of post-war international affairs, omitted.]

13. As you have doubtless been told, we have made a slight change in the arrangements for the despatch of the bag. This letter will be despatched ten

days and not a week after my last, but from now on weekly despatch will be resumed. I hope the new arrangement will be rather quicker than the old.

(Rather limp after a hunt with Lahore hounds and about 4 hours with Punjab Ministers and officials.)

Enclosure to No. 238

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Field Marshal Smuts

L/P&J/8/299: f 43

VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *23 November 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

My dear Field Marshal,

This is to ask you to help me in trying to improve relations between South Africa and India. You remember we spoke about this in London, and I warned you how high the feeling was in India on the position of Indians in South Africa.

Since I have returned to India, I have been brought closer into touch with this feeling and have been struck by its real intensity both in official and non-official circles. I am convinced that there is nothing that arouses Indians of all classes more than the idea that their nationals in other parts of the Empire are treated with inequality or indignity. It is in fact, so far as my observation goes, the one and only subject on which there is unanimity in India. It is expressing itself at the moment in a belief that negotiation is useless and a demand that all possible means of retaliation against South African nationals and S.A. interests shall be put into force at once by the Government of India. If a submission to this effect which has been made by the Department concerned comes before my Executive Council, there is little doubt that it will be supported by an overwhelming majority of the Council.

I am most anxious to avoid this action, which would harm the interests of both countries, might embarrass our common war effort, and can only have the effect of exacerbating feeling and of making an eventual settlement more difficult. But I shall be unable to restrain my Government from taking such action unless you can help me by agreeing to begin negotiations on the matters at issue. I know that you are as anxious as I am to improve relations; and if your Government will make a proposal to negotiate I think it might avoid a serious issue.

I am sending this by the hand of the High Commissioner, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad Khan, who leaves tomorrow for South Africa. I have only had opportunity for one conversation with him; he gives me the impression that his *amour propre* has been very much offended by what has happened to him in South Africa; and if you could see him personally and he could realise your sympathetic attitude towards Indians, it would have a great effect, I am sure.

[14] L/E/8/3743. [15] *Ibid.* [16] See No. 82, note 6.

I hope you can help me in this matter. As you know, the years just ahead are very critical years for India and her connection with the Empire, and an increase in bitterness with one of the Dominions might have serious effects in her attitude; while a sympathetic approach would have the best possible effect and would reinforce the impression created by the help of the Dominions, including South Africa, with food during the present crisis.

You and I know better than almost anyone what we owe to India in the defence of our Middle East bastion in this war; and I remember the help you gave me over the avoidance of certain incidents with Indian troops passing through S. African ports in the early part of the war. So that I am sure you will do all you can to assist me in this important issue.

Should it be found possible to open negotiations, I would see that India was represented by the most capable and open-minded negotiators I could find.

I hope you are well and that you had a successful visit to England. I have been much interested and impressed by your speeches.

Please remember me to Mrs. Smuts.

Yours very sincerely,

WAVELL

239

Mr Bevin to Mr Amery

L/E/8/2527: f 55

MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND NATIONAL SERVICE, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE, LONDON, S.W. 1, *24 November 1943*

Dear Amery,

I have read with very great interest the document[1] setting forth Linlithgow's conclusions on the note[2] which Cripps and I prepared, which you sent to me under cover of your letter of 25th October.[3]

I do not feel that it would now serve a very useful purpose to follow it up on these lines, but in view of the directive[4] to Lord Wavell and the fact that he also is in possession of our views, would it not be wise, in a reasonable time, to ask Lord Wavell if he would favour us with his views in the light of the developments now taking place in India. He will bring a new mind to the whole situation and I feel it would be an advantage if we could know how the problem presents itself to him.

Yours sincerely,

ERNEST BEVIN

[1] No. 113. [2] i.e. Enclosure to No. 276 in Vol. III; see also No. 574. [3] See No. 186.
[4] Enclosure to No. 172.

240

Mr Amery to Mr Bevin

L/E/8/2527: f 54

INDIA OFFICE, *24 November 1943*

Dear Bevin,
Thank you for your letter. I have recently received from Wavell a note[1] which he has circulated to the Governors of all Provinces with a view to discussion at the Governors' meeting which he is holding in Delhi at present. This note dealt with reconstruction problems and it was clear from it that Wavell intended to ventilate with Governors the general question of a drive for social and economic improvement. I expect that I shall receive before long a report of the proceedings of the Conference and when I do I hope to be able to let you and Cripps know how this subject is moving. But I expect we shall have to give Wavell more time before we can expect him to give a considered and final view as to what will be possible.

Yours sincerely,
L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 198.

241

Secretary of State to Government of India, External Affairs Department

Telegram, L/P&S/12/2636: ff 135–8

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *25 November 1943, 6 pm*

27086. Status of Agent-General of India in U.S.A.[1] Suggestion has been made more than once that there would be advantage in transforming Agent-General into Minister independent of Ambassador and in charge of separate Indian Legation and I should be glad if you would now re-examine this suggestion. If as the result it is now your considered view that there would be definite balance of advantage in such a change please let me have your reasoned arguments for presentation to H.M.G.

2. In putting forward your case it will be desirable *inter alia* to cover the following points:—

(1) The extent to which it can be said that there are special Indian interests in U.S.A. which could be taken up by such Indian Minister more

[1] See L/P&S/12/2636 for previous discussion on this subject. For a summary of that discussion, see No. 475.

conveniently for all concerned, and the extent to which in present war conditions Indian questions can be separated from wider British interests without creating confusion. Justification for change suggested would seem largely to turn on this point.

(2) Assuming a sufficiency of matters in regard to which H.M.G. would not, in practice, wish to intervene, fact that Bajpai must still constitutionally be responsible to H.M.G. in last resort need not cause embarrassment, but machinery through which he would pass on representations made to him by U.S. Government and through which he would receive instructions will need consideration, bearing in mind the constitutional position. It would no doubt be necessary to have some agreed definition or limitation of matters with which Minister could deal on his own and arrangements laid down for liaison with H.M. Ambassador, and should you on further consideration favour the change of status of the post, I should be glad to receive draft of instructions on which Bajpai would work.

(3) An estimate of the political advantage to be derived in India from this advance in status. In this connection I would draw attention to Maxwell's view quoted in paragraph 2 of Viceroy's Personal telegram No. 545-S.C.[2] of 8th October.

(4) The extent to which this arrangement in America, which would inevitably have to be made reciprocal, would be likely to give rise to demands from other countries for similar arrangements which it would presumably be impossible to refuse, and the degree of embarrassment to be apprehended therefrom. It may well be that an American Minister in India would in general appreciate and respect the constitutional position in his dealings with the Government of India, but there would seem to be a danger that diplomatic representatives from other States, e.g. China, Persia and Afghanistan might fail to do so with embarrassing consequences. There might also be awkwardness if we reached position where separate Indian Legations in Kabul and Tehran were necessitated, though no doubt that position would be reached in any case when India attains Commonwealth status.

(5) What effect would change have on proposed new publicity set-up for India in U.S.A.?

[2] In this para. Sir R. Maxwell was reported as holding the view 'that . . . we have never been thanked by the Indian political classes . . . for action intended to give India a status similar to that of other Dominions . . . (? public opinion) in India on such matters would be likely to represent only politicians and Congress press and that the great bulk of the population would be entirely indifferent to the whole (? proceedings).' L/P&S/12/2636: f 168.

242

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *25 November 1943*
Received: 20 December 1943

I have not had a further letter from you since I wrote on the 19th,[1] but I must try to make Thursday my regular day for writing and shall therefore fire ahead today, even if there isn't a great deal new to say.

2. It certainly was rather absurd that you should not have been officially informed about the meeting of the four All-Highest (*plus* the feminine Super All-Highest) until days after others obviously knew all about it.[2] The trouble is that in matters of this sort we here are ourselves kept in the dark and telegrams go out to the Viceroy only simultaneously with the Dominion Prime Ministers. In this case it meant that there were others in your domain who were informed (not of course through the India Office or with our knowledge) before you were. We must certainly see to it that that does not occur again.

C. K-s was not passing through Canada or Australia or N. Z.
W.

3. What the great meeting may portend, I have of course no idea; but I am inclined to look upon it as more an end in itself then as the incubator of anything very startling in the way of new developments East or West. It may have its ultimate value if, by improving contact between Chiang Kai-shek and Stalin, it may increase the probability of Russia coming in with us against Japan later on.

4. We have, I think, turned the corner of a pretty unpleasant crisis in the Lebanon[3] and have done so with credit to ourselves in the eyes of the Arab and Muslim world, and, I can only hope, without too much damage to our good relations with France. Dick Casey on the spot and Harold Macmillan at Algiers seem both to have handled very difficult negotiations with skill and

[1] No. 234.

[2] In tel. 22–U of 19 November, Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell of the Middle East meetings (see No. 226, note 8) between Mr Churchill, President Roosevelt, Marshal Stalin and Generalissimo Chiang Kai-shek. In tel. 19–U of 23 November, Lord Wavell replied that since Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek had passed through India some days before, and Lord Mountbatten had left on the 20th, he had been aware of the meeting for some time. He complained of 'scant courtesy' from H.M.G. at not being informed officially earlier, and suggested: 'I might be as much trusted with secret as others in India and in less responsible positions who have known all about it for many days.' L/PO/10/34 and L/PO/10/32b.

[3] See No. 234, note 4. On 21 November the Free French announced their decision to release and reinstate the leading Lebanese ministers as a preliminary to negotiations with them.

tact, as well as with firmness. As regards Casey, I have sent Winston a further telegram[4] or rather transmitted your own telegram, laying stress on the urgency of an early succession to Rutherford. I do hope Casey will agree, even if it should only be for inside of three years. He has got both the knowledge and personality that should fill the bill, as well as the status which should make India feel that we have appreciated the gravity of the Bengal situation.

5. Talking to Smuts the other night he referred to his talks with you and Linlithgow and said that he did not see how India could be saved from relapsing into chaos unless a reasonable stiffening of British officials were left in the country. I told him that it was obvious that so long as British officials remained it was essential to recruit the best, and that we are seriously considering here the problem of how to make the Services attractive to new entrants, possibly by some sort of guarantee of employment in the Colonial or Home Civil Service afterwards. On the other hand, I pointed out how difficult it was, apart from all our pledges, to resist the rising tide of nationalist emotion in the East and that our best hope of preserving a British element, whether in the administrative or the technical field, would be by making Indian Governments feel that they did so on their own and not under any compulsion.

6. Thinking of the future, I confess I am sometimes wondering whether Indians can ever agree on any common structure for India as a whole and whether we may not have to acquiesce in something like a general break-up, with the Viceroy, Commander-in-Chief and an irresponsible nominated Council administering certain common functions, admittedly on a temporary basis, pending the possibility of the different elements agreeing. If something of that kind were to come about, I am not sure that Coupland's four regions[5] might not afford a natural basis for the provisional settlement. Or it might be three regions, if Hindu Southern India really wished to be joined up with the Hindustan of the Ganges Valley. All this is very much thinking aloud, but I feel that we have got to be prepared for almost any eventuality and keep our minds quite flexible.

7. We shall be sending the Government of India in the next few days a long telegram,[6] the outcome of deliberations of the India Finance Committee and a departmental sub-committee, suggesting more vigorous measures to curb inflation. It is on that score that I shall probably get most strongly attacked in the House before long. If only the Americans could be induced to let us have some of their own surplus silver.

[Para. 8, on a possibility of more ambulances and mobile canteens for Bengal, omitted.]

9. I am glad to think that the Governors' Conference was a success and that you have been able to stir them all up to a sense of the urgency of the immediate

economic position. As for planning the future, it is at any rate something that you have begun to sow a seed in their minds. I shall be most interested to get the reports of your meetings when they come along.

[Para. 10, on employment for Captain Julian Amery, omitted.]

11. I celebrated my 70th birthday on Monday by going to lunch with Ian Hamilton. After seeing him eat every course of a really excellent lunch, drink his champagne, and smoke a fat cigar, while discoursing freely on many subjects, including his memoirs, which have, I think, just reached the South African War, I departed feeling that I was a mere boy and might look forward to some few years of activity yet. Possibly, on the other hand, Winston may think otherwise and when it comes to the much discussed Cabinet reshuffle over Christmas might think of replacing me by someone younger, though looking round I confess I cannot see many candidates for the job.

Later

12. Since dictating the above, your letter of the 16th[7] has come in and if this sort of corresponding date is likely it will give me a chance of answering your letters the moment I get them, at any rate to such extent as immediate answer is possible.

13. At the beginning of this letter I explained to you the reasons for the apparent discourtesy in not letting you know about the meeting of the high potentates. Apart from that, however, I am not happy at the idea that Chiang Kai-shek, and consequently Mountbatten, should have been invited to join the discussions, even as an after-thought to the original plan, without realising that if those discussions include South-East Asia operations, they naturally also are likely to involve the extent to which those operations may have to make their call upon India's resources. It may well be that if the invitation to Chiang Kai-shek is mainly complimentary they will not go too closely into the scale of future operations in that quarter. I hope, too, that before Mountbatten went off you were able to let him have the information you referred to in paragraph 5 of your last letter. All the same, it does look to me as if Auchinleck and Lindsell should have been asked too.

14. As regards Bengal procurement, you are no doubt right in thinking that nothing could be worse than an ineffective Bengal Government scheme which only frightened the villagers and then broke down. But clearly, as you say, Bengal must set up the necessary organisation for the future. It may well be that even if this crop is a good one, next year's may be as bad as last. I can only hope, too, that this idea that Calcutta must be fed from outside Bengal is a purely temporary device to bring down Bengal prices and enable the

[4] No. 236. [5] See No. 103, note 2. [6] 27374 of 28 November. L/F/7/687.
[7] No. 230.

Government to build up a reserve. After all, you have your anxieties in other parts of India and we don't know yet what may be the Punjab crop next spring.

15. I realise what a ticklish business it is to bring the Punjab into line and certainly am not going to express any views, in my ignorance of the situation, as to how far you should apply pressure to them. But I gather that your bold action under 126-A has had its effect on the Sind Government and produced no very startling reaction.

16. As you suggested we are turning the question of Bajpai's position in America into the official channel and in the first instance putting to the External Affairs Department some queries[8] as to the practical justification of the step, apart from any sentimental effect either on Bajpai personally or on Indian opinion. The real strength of the case when Canadian representation was first agreed to was the extent of matters which could be settled between the two Governments and in respect of which settlement via Ambassador, to Foreign Office, to Dominions Office, to Canada, was an obvious circumlocution. The field of such matters is obviously less in the case of India, but it will still, I think, be necessary, in order to convince the Cabinet, [to prove?] that there is such a field. Apart from co-ordinating the various war activities, there is of course the question of trade negotiations; status of Indian traders in the United States; the revision of the immigration laws against Indians, parallel to the concession now made to the Chinese, &c. I dare say there may be others which have not occurred to me. It would also be valuable to have your official view as to the advantages or disadvantages of direct diplomatic representation at Delhi by others besides the United States. I am not sure myself how far there is any reason to accept a diplomat at Delhi unless you yourself were also at the same time anxious to establish one in the capital of the country concerned. In other words, there is no reason for accepting an Afghan Legation at Delhi unless it were thought desirable that there should be an Indian Legation at Kabul over and above the existing representative. I should have thought myself that if the thing is done at all, the right line is to confine it at the outset to two or three of the really big countries, e.g. the United States and possibly China, and leave it at that. Canada began, if I remember rightly, only with the United States and France in the first instance, South Africa with the United States, Holland and Portugal.

17. If Shafa'at Ahmad Khan can do anything to get your colleagues to postpone further the question of retaliation against South Africa it would be a very good thing. I have never felt that the South African case was really a very strong one, except in so far as India has a chip on her shoulder with regard to all discrimination against persons of Indian descent. The present discrimination is a purely temporary hold up of land purchase (I believe in the main speculative) by Indians who are South African British subjects, though of Indian

descent. I am afraid that there may be a possibility of the subject being ventilated again, by the case of a particular Indian who has announced that he means to go to prison for defying the regulations preventing him completing building operations on a property which he had already bought before the standstill came into effect.[9]

[Para. 18, on employment for Captain Julian Amery, omitted.]

[8] No. 241. [9] See also No. 248, para. 6.

243

Mr Turnbull to Mr Jenkins

L/PO/6/111: f 133

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *26 November 1943*

Dear Jenkins,

With reference to the Secretary of State's private telegram to the Viceroy 1190[1] of the 4th November, I write to let you know, for His Excellency's information, that the position now is that the Dominions Office are aiming at a meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers to be held in the last week of April. Mr. Curtin has stated that so far as he can judge at present a meeting at that time would be convenient for him and Mr. Mackenzie King has undertaken to do his best to fit in with that arrangement if it is convenient to others. A reply from Mr. Fraser is awaited, but it can be assumed that Field Marshal Smuts, who is here, is in agreement with this proposal.

The probability therefore is that a meeting will now be held at about that time, though the precise date is at present tentative. It would therefore seem desirable to aim at the return of the Indian Representatives at the War Cabinet towards the end of March or in the first week of April, so that they will be here for a few weeks before the conference opens. In view, however, of the frequent postponement of the Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting in the past, it would seem desirable not to open conversations in regard to Indian representation here before it is thought necessary to do so with a view to getting the representatives back by the end of March.

If any further information is received as to the prospects it will be communicated at once.

Yours sincerely,

F. F. TURNBULL[2]

[1] No. 206.

[2] In tel. 2853–S of 27 December 1943, Mr Jenkins asked Mr Turnbull if he had any further information on the holding of the Conference so as to give the Indian representatives ample notice. In tel. 4 of 1 January 1944, Mr Turnbull replied that 1 May had definitely been fixed as the date for the meeting. L/PO/6/111.

244

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 149

IMPORTANT
PRIVATE

PESHAWAR, *28 November 1943, 11.20 pm*
Received: 28 November, 11.30 pm

No. 569–S.C. Impending vacancies in Home and Finance Memberships. For Home Membership I think I must accept view that Twynam is right choice though I should have liked to see more of him before final decision. Before moving further I must ask him whether he is willing and may have to offer personal concession in pay. As Governor his pay is 6,000 as against 5,500 for Member of Council. Do you agree to strictly private enquiry from him and to settlement of pay concession if any between Raisman and myself?

2. For Central Provinces choice seems to lie between Sloan first dormant commission holder and Mudie now successfully (officiating) in Bihar. Lewis is unsuitable for (? omission) [Province?] larger than Orissa. I believe Mudie to be the better choice. Do you agree to Sloan or Mudie? If so I will consult Hallett before making final recommendation.

3. I have strong inclination towards appointing Indian as Finance Member. It may be argued that it is unfair to initiate control by Indian member when financial problems are exceptionally difficult but Indians have got to manage their finances sooner or later and we cannot wait indefinitely for normal times before making change. I cannot see financial position being normal for many years to come. If an Indian is appointed Mudaliar seems best choice. I am sure that introduction of prominent Indian banker or financier would be unwise. Mudaliar has the ability given some special technical underpinning by officials and is, so far as I can judge, honest and courageous. But before I make recommendation I should like your advice and opinion whether Cabinet would accept recommendation. If you judge Mudaliar unacceptable, best course seems to be to give Raisman limited extension. He knows the problem intimately and is competent and no reorganisation in department would be necessary such as Indian appointment would probably require. I do not myself put Raisman as higher than competent and think he is tired and stale at present. But he is sound and his extension would excite less criticism than new appointment from Home for which I imagine suitable first-class man would be difficult to find.

245

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/7/6313: f 13

PRIVATE *30 November 1943*

2617–S. I am trying to reduce number and length of telegrams. It will help if you will draw attention to telegrams which from your end seem unnecessary or too wordy.

2. India Office seem to me quite as bad as Departments here. See for example your 27086[1] of November 25th about Bajpai's status which asks at inordinate length question to which answers must be known to you already. Gibson's[2] telegram certainly does not suggest that you, Halifax and Eden all favour the change, which I know to be the case.

[1] No. 241. [2] 'Your' is suggested for 'Gibson's' in manuscript in the decipher.

246

Note by Sir D. Monteath

L/PO/8/52b: ff 143–4

2 December 1943

The Governor of the Bank, who was away all last week, has returned to-day but has not yet been able to make an appointment for me;[1] the Deputy Governor is now away with influenza.

In the meantime, for what they are worth, I put down my views on the very difficult question raised in relation to the Finance Membership.

The Viceroy says[2] that on the whole he is in favour of appointing an Indian for the reason that Indians must sooner or later have responsibility for Indian finance. "Sooner or later" seems rather to beg the question as to the advisability of putting in any Indian at this particularly difficult juncture, even though the present difficult conditions may continue for some years yet. I think there might be a strong feeling in the Cabinet that the wiser course would be to safeguard the present and let the future take care of itself for the time being.

If an Indian were put in the Viceroy would avoid the selection of a prominent Indian banker or financier, and his mind is moving in the direction of Sir R. Mudaliar, who has general ability and is believed to be "both honest and

[1] This meeting was evidently suggested as a result of Mr Amery's enquiry of Mr Montagu Norman whether he could think of anyone for the Finance Membership; see No. 234, para. 7.

[2] No. 244.

courageous".[3] But Lord Wavell adds that Sir R. Mudaliar would require "some special technical under-pinning by officials". The significance of the word "special" seems to amount to importation from outside of a specially qualified officer to strengthen the Finance Department, which presumably is not regarded as strongly enough staffed to hold up the hands of a Member having no more than general administrative ability. Whether such additional officer came from a Province (which is unlikely) or from this country, has it been considered how invidious would be his position imported between the Member and a Secretary of some standing? And how invidious would be the position of the Member, since it would be assumed that the real power lay with this imported shadow behind the throne?

That is one difficulty. Another difficulty attendant on the appointment of an Indian to this important post is the communal issue that it would evoke. Apart from Mr. Jinnah's strong hint a year ago to Sir Muhammad Usman that there would be trouble with the Muslim League if either the Home or the Finance portfolio were filled by an Indian without his being consulted,[4] the transference of Sir R. Mudaliar from Supply to Finance would entail the appointment of another Indian to Supply. It would be very difficult indeed to find a Muslim competent to hold the very important portfolio of Supply and if a Hindu were appointed the present balance would be upset. There is the further difficulty, which might have to be faced about the time when the change would occur in the Finance Membership, that a Muslim Member of Council may be required in London to attend the War Cabinet. If that period of attendance were so short that it would not be worth while to make an acting appointment of another Muslim the Muslims would be 2 down for the time being in the Council. Alternatively another adequate Muslim would have to be found—no easy task.

These two considerations seem to militate fairly strongly against the selection of any Indian, or of Sir R. Mudaliar in particular.

The alternatives are either to continue Sir Jeremy Raisman or to import a European from this country. The latter course presents the obvious difficulty. Persons suitable to become Finance Member of the Government of India are never easy to find and at the present time this is particularly difficult since any really suitable candidate must already be engaged on work of high importance. The difficulty about the former course of extending Sir Jeremy's tenure is that he is giving signs of fatigue, so much so that it would be only fair to him that he should have a spell of leave, at any rate after he has got his next budget through; and there is some doubt whether the obvious course of making the Secretary Acting Member would meet requirements. But presumably no great risk would be taken in leaving Finance to the Secretary for 3 months or so immediately after the passage of the budget, and if no suitable European candidate for fresh appointment can be found an extension of Sir Jeremy's tenure would seem to be the safest course.

On the whole, though I agree generally with his remarks in the note[5] below, I would not make the addition to the draft telegram suggested by Sir C. Kisch. It amounts to something like a reversal of the tentative view expressed to Lord Wavell in the Secretary of State's letter of 8th November,[6] on which Lord Wavell seems evidently to be building; and if a reversal of that tentative view has to be made it would perhaps be better made in the light of the impact of another opinion such as the Chancellor's, or possibly Mr Montagu Norman's.

Previously, when the disposal of these two key posts retained by European Members has been considered the tendency has been rather in the direction that if one had to be surrendered it would be easier to surrender the Home than the Finance Membership. The reverse seems to be the present tendency. I should think, however, that the two will have to be considered together when the time comes for the Cabinet to consider the matter. That being so it seems desirable to make sure that the contemplated disposal of the Home Membership by the appointment of Sir H. Twynam is in fact feasible, that is to say to take soundings of him as to his willingness to accept the appointment if it were decided to offer it to him: and the draft[7] suggested by Mr. Turnbull seems suitable for this purpose.

D. T. M.

[3] Sir D. Monteath added in manuscript here: 'It is likely to call for considerable courage & tenacity to withstand the pressure in Council or the Legislature to take the narrow Indian view of India's liabilities: still more courage to withstand the innuendoes if the broader line is taken. But Sir R. M. has shown himself to have courage. D. T. M.'

[4] Vol. III, No. 243.

[5] In this note of 1 December, Sir C. Kisch expressed the view that 'the appointment of an Indian at this juncture to the Finance Portfolio would seem to me very hazardous.' Even were Sir R. Mudaliar supported by a competent all-round expert from Britain, he felt 'it is never satisfactory to have a situation in which the real Finance Member has to be supported by a more authoritative shadow, who incidentally would not have knowledge of the Indian scene.' Sir C. Kisch concluded that, on broader grounds, Mr Amery must consider whether any real political benefit would arise from Indianisation of the Finance membership—Indianisation possibly for a long time—'seeing that the difference between the British and the Indian political points of view goes so much deeper.' He therefore suggested a para. on the following lines should be added to Mr Turnbull's draft (see note [7] below):

> On reflection I feel a great doubt about the wisdom of appointing an Indian at this stage to the Finance Membership. This involves no reflection on Mudaliar's competence, but I hardly think it fair to saddle him with questions of possibly acute controversy that are likely to arise here out of the sterling balances and the reconciliation of the requirements of S.E.A.C. with India's economic possibilities. Even if it were possible to find a suitably competent adviser from here, the situation in which the Indian Finance Member would find himself would not be altogether satisfactory.

Mr Amery, however, minuted that the para. should not be included. L/PO/8/52b: f 145.

[6] No. 234, para. 7; the date should be 19 November. Lord Wavell had not in fact received Mr Amery's letter when he sent his telegram.

[7] Mr Turnbull's draft suggested that Lord Wavell should sound Sir H. Twynam on whether he would accept the Home Membership and let Mr Amery know the result as soon as possible. The draft was despatched, with certain amendments including the addition of a sentence making reservations as to the Cabinet's reaction to the Indianisation of Finance, as tel. 1284 of 4 December. L/PO/8/52b.

247

Miss Harrison to Mr Amery

L/P&J/8/623: ff 193–5

2 CRANBOURNE COURT, ALBERT BRIDGE ROAD, S.W. 11,
2 December 1943

Dear Mr Amery,
This letter to Mr Gandhi has taken me a long time to write; it has been no easy task as you will understand. I hope you will feel that my reference to your help is rightly phrased; you said I might mention the fact I had made this request to you for I would like Mr Gandhi to know this.

I believe if it is found possible to deliver this to Mr Gandhi—it will help. I am grateful to you for allowing me to have this swift means of getting it to India.

Yours sincerely,
AGATHA HARRISON

Enclosure to No. 247

COPY OF MISS HARRISON'S LETTER TO MR. GANDHI DATED 2.12.43

I am writing this letter in the faith that it will reach you. I asked Mr Amery if he would expedite its delivery to India, and he very kindly said he would. At the same time he reminded me of the strictures that have been placed on all correspondence.

Just ten years ago, at this time, I was preparing to come to India. I had not seen you since the R[ound] T[able] C[onference] days though we had corresponded frequently. The night before you left London you talked with a few of us. You said you foresaw "a great strain ahead" between our two countries and that people were needed to work for "mutual understanding"—people who could pass between various circles here and who would keep closely in touch with India. You also suggested that some of us should visit India to see for ourselves what was happening; not from any one point of view, but in an honest attempt to see the situation as a whole. I remember that someone asked you if language would not be a difficulty; you replied that "the language of the heart was all that was necessary". Some of us shouldered this task of working for mutual understanding, and in the weeks and months that followed your arrest in 1932 we struggled with all that resulted at this end. It was out of this background of experience I came to India in February 1934.

On arrival in Bombay there was a letter waiting for me from you. You said you were in Patna and would shortly be leaving, with Rajendra Prasad, to tour the earthquake stricken area of Bihar. You asked me to accompany you on this

tour. During my stay in Bombay I sensed the situation. I met officials, both British and Indian, and several of the men and women just released from prison. Tension was high on both sides; there was a fear in official circles lest the Congress Relief work in Bihar would be used for political advantage.

What I saw and learnt in those crowded weeks is burnt into my memory. C. F. Andrews' *Indian Earthquake*[1] is a faithful record of these days. I watched you and Rajendra Prasad "steady" distraught and homeless people. I saw the hold you had on them in their plight—you asked "What has this calamity taught you? This is no time for differences between Government and Congress; between Hindu and Moslem; between Touchable and Untouchable. If you take money from the Relief Funds see that you earn it." You must have addressed hundreds of meetings during that tour but you always said the same thing.

I saw the able administration of the Relief work. I recall very vividly the night you drafted your statement calling off Civil Disobedience. The fears that had been expressed to me of political advantage being taken I found had no substance, for you and Rajendra Prasad watched this with vigilant eye. And when one of your party—young Bulow [Bütow]—without consulting you or any other member of your party beforehand took upon himself to address some students in one town I well remember your drastic handling of that incident. Bulow [Bütow] brought to you the letter of stern reprimand he received from the local British official. This was the first intimation you had of Bulow's [Bütow's] action, and your reaction was instantaneous. You told him that he had "offended" and that a "humble apology" must be written immediately to the British official; you drafted what you felt should be said. You pointed out to him that you were under a self-imposed vow to engage in no political agitation, and you asked him to imagine how his action must appear to the British official; you told him that he must leave your party unless he wrote the kind of letter that you felt his unseemly action warranted. I can't forget the incident, for you turned the rather pompous young Bulow [Bütow] over to me to see your instructions were carried out—and it took five hours before you were satisfied!

With all this in memory, I write to you now as ten years later India is faced with famine—not earthquake; and it is set, as in the case of the Bihar disaster, in the midst of political deadlock. This time a world war is added and a stifling atmosphere of distrust and suspicion is abroad.

We watch this tragedy. The suffering of India is stirring people here very deeply. (I wish you could see the evidence of this in the letters that accompany money sent to the Relief Funds). From the articles you wrote some time ago in *Harijan* it is clear to see that you foresaw the disaster. Horace Alexander, who is now back amongst us, tells of the brief talk he had with you in February and

[1] See No. 226, note 10.

how the situation was then burdening your mind, and of your wish to help. Those of us who are privileged to call you and your colleagues our friends, realise that there is a reservoir of help and experience as yet untapped; that if utilised might change the situation overnight. We press this conviction and cite the precedent of Bihar. But we are met with answers such as these: "Yes—that happened in 1934. What proof have we that it would happen now? The threat to [of?] Civil Disobedience remains. There is far too much at stake to risk a recurrence of all that happened after August 1942", etc., etc. And the same fears as were expressed at the time of the Bihar disaster (of Congress taking political advantage) are expressed again now.

Reading this, I can hear you say: "It is for the Government to take the initiative" and you would refer to the correspondence[2] that passed between Lord Linlithgow and you and what you said about the need for consultation with your colleagues. And so this vicious, hopeless circle goes round. Who will cut it?

I bring this "circle" to you—Gandhiji. In doing so you will appreciate that this is no one-sided approach. The responsibility for cutting it at this end is ever pressed. But political limits seem to have been reached. When that is the case then something else has to come in. The close contact I have had with you since the London days, together with the knowledge I gleaned from working with C. F. Andrews of you and your methods leave me with the belief and conviction that you will find a way to cut the circle. You have done so many times in the past, for you have an understanding of the limitless possibilities of the forces of the spirit.

* * * *[3]

As I write this letter I have on my desk a cartoon by LOW that appeared the other day in the *Evening Standard*. The caption reads BETWEEN THE UNHELPFUL AND THE HELPLESS. It depicts an Indian street; the pavements on each side are crowded with dead and starving men, women and children. In the middle of the road is a huge broken-down motor lorry labelled INDIA—FOOD DISTRIBUTION. Two ropes are attached to the front of the lorry—one tightly bound to the straining figure of Lord Wavell. The other rope he is holding with a beckoning hand to a seated Indian figure in front of him who is reading a paper entitled POLITICAL PLATITUDES.

I would have made a very different picture. For I would have shown *you* coming swiftly to meet Lord Wavell—and with you Mr. Jinnah. One of your hands would be held out for the second rope and the other would be holding a paper with the words "We call a truce on Civil Disobedience".

My caption for this cartoon would be your own words spoken in Bihar: THIS IS NO TIME FOR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CONGRESS: BETWEEN HINDU AND MUSLIM.[4]

[2] See Vol. II, Nos. 553 and 611; Vol. III, Nos. 305, 340, note 2, 353, 358, 369, 395 and 421.

3 These asterisks are reproduced from L/P&J/8/623: f 195.

4 On 3 December, the original of this enclosure was sent by Mr Turnbull to Mr Jenkins with a covering note explaining that Mr Amery had promised Miss Harrison he would ask Lord Wavell if it could be transmitted to Mr Gandhi. On 23 December, Mr Abell informed Mr Turnbull that Lord Wavell had agreed to the delivery of Miss Harrison's letter but this did not imply acceptance of any obligation by the Government of India to communicate an answer. On 4 January 1944, Mr Turnbull informed Miss Harrison of the terms of Mr Abell's letter. L/P&J/8/623.

248

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

MOST SECRET AND PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *2 December 1943*
Received: 20 December

The Cairo Conference seems to have ended to the satisfaction of everybody concerned, except the Press, who are furious over the way in which they were kept out of things and then finally anticipated by a bad leak via Lisbon. So far as photographs are concerned, Madame Chiang Kai-shek seems to have been well in the foreground, looking her best! The Chinese seem to have scored most heavily and to have had their claims endorsed to everything they may have lost in the way of territory in the last 50 years. I am not so sure whether Stalin will like this unconditional restoration of Manchuria to China, considering that Russia was in effective control before it was pushed out by the Japanese, and probably means to get back there as the price of any co-operation against Japan. Whether he will be sulky over it now or just shrug his shoulders, knowing that he can bide his time, remains to be seen. I did send a telegram[1] to Winston to suggest that if the consideration of operations in South-East Asia brought in the question of what India could do to help, someone from India should be sent to join in the discussions.

2. Meanwhile, you have been busy in the Punjab and at Peshawar, and, I have no doubt, been able, in spite of Chhotu Ram, to bring the Punjab Ministers to a more co-operative frame of mind over the food situation. On the face of it that situation looks a good deal better and I can only hope that the new Bengal rice crop will be up to expectations.

3. I was rather amused to get your telegram[2] pointing out that it was not only in messages from India that brevity is sometimes lacking. In the case of the telegram[3] raising questions about the future status of Bajpai it was of course desirable, when the thing was once turned into the official channel, to recapitulate the points. Moreover, as you will no doubt realise, even if Eden and I are

1 Grand 215 of 25 November 1943. L/PO/4/24: f 545. 2 No. 245. 3 No. 241.

in favour, it might not be easy to convince the Prime Minister and other members of the War Cabinet that the change should be made, and I was anxious to make sure that there was a sufficiently strong case not to run the risk of bringing it forward and having it turned down as clearly not sufficiently thought out.

4. I have just been reading the report[4] of Indore's National War and Peace Front demonstration. Whatever his matrimonial[5] and other failings may be, the general line taken in his speech seems on the face of it praiseworthy enough. The idea that the National War Front can be eventually turned into a Peace Front and play an active part in reconstruction, thus side-tracking the endless communal controversy, certainly has something to be said for it.

5. In this connection I had a talk yesterday with Sir E. Villiers, who has just come back from India and may be going on to America to do some useful talking to editors, &c. He tells me that he is much struck with the improvement in the political and general atmosphere since he was there last, eighteen months ago, and not unhopeful of the future. His own inclination would be very much to find some favourable opportunity before long, say the military collapse of Germany, for letting out the Congress prisoners on stipulations with regard to their behaviour during the rest of the war which should not cause them to lose too much face. Naturally I did not say anything to him about what you have had at the back of your mind, and indeed, in view of the attitude of the War Cabinet,[6] will have to keep at the back of your mind until a situation should arise which might make it possible for us to enable the War Cabinet to reconsider their attitude. Villiers also strongly urged the setting up of some sort of impartial study of constitutional problems. I put to him the difficulty of any organisation set up by the Government of India, and on the other hand the complete failure of any body of Indians, even moderately representative, prepared to come forward, in which case they might rely on facilities, secretarial help, &c., from the Government. I don't know whether you have had time to give this side of things any further consideration? I have sometimes wondered whether, supposing you invited Stalin, Roosevelt and the Swiss President each to nominate a constitutional expert and let the trio get to work, possibly perhaps with a Canadian and Australian added, that could really be denounced by anyone as weighting the scales in favour of any particular interest.

6. The case of this Indian, Pather, in Durban, who has challenged imprisonment by continuing to build on a site which he bought before the Pegging Act, led to questions in the House this morning.[7] I could only stonewall and point to the fact that this is the kind of matter normally dealt with between Governments of the Empire on a footing of equality. I might have added that it would really have been derogatory of India's status to treat her as a dependency on

whose behalf we made protests; and that protests on our part would no doubt have been met by a polite intimation that this was no longer any of our business.

7. That is in fact implied in India's right to retaliate on her own, which we have not thought of interfering with. What would, of course, be far the best thing is if your colleagues could realise that having asserted that right it would be a mistake for India either to cut off her own nose in order to spite South Africa's face or to interfere with the war effort, and that the best thing would be to leave the matter for the time being and if the South African attitude continued unsympathetic, to do something by way of retaliation when it suited India's book later on and not as a mere gesture of annoyance. The Act,[8] after all, remains on the Statute Book and can be brought into force whenever it suits India's convenience.

8. There can be no doubt that the present indeterminate status of India presents us with many difficulties. Here in this country very few people have the foggiest notion of the extent to which India, not only provincially, but also at the Centre, controls its own affairs, and any suggestion that I am not personally to blame for anything that goes wrong is at once denounced as a mean sneaking out of responsibility, not only by pro-Congress extremists, but even by people like Schuster who might know better. Even John Anderson, on the Cabinet Finance Committee, is a little inclined to think that I could have pushed the Government of India much further in the direction of anticipating the danger of inflation.

9. In this connection I have just sent you a long telegram[9] pretty strongly worded, and indeed the situation does demand a very determined effort unless the inflationary gap is to get wider and wider and end in something approaching economic collapse. There again, the amount of help that we can give at this end by sending more consumers' goods or reducing existing requirements is comparatively small. The best hope I see is in the added gold that the Treasury is now prepared to sell in India[10] and in the hope that we may still persuade the Americans to do something more substantial about silver.

[Para. 10, on the work of a research committee exploring problems likely to face India in the postwar world; and para. 11, on a possible appointment to the South East Asia Command, omitted.]

[4] Not printed.
[5] In July 1943, the Maharaja of Indore was remarried in the United States shortly after obtaining a divorce from his second wife. L/P&S/13/1132.
[6] See No. 168. [7] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 395, cols. 510–12.
[8] Presumably the Indian Reciprocity Act, 1943 (IX of 1943) and the Reciprocity (Amendment) Act 1943. [9] See No. 242, note 6.
[10] In tel. 27965 of 6 December, the Secretary of State informed the G. of I. Finance Dept. of the Treasury's decision to aim at increasing the quantity of gold available for sale in India on United Kingdom account from $\frac{3}{4}$ million ounces to $2\frac{1}{4}$ million ounces a quarter. L/F/7/1233.

249

Sir R. Maxwell to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

Wavell Papers. Official Correspondence: India, October 1943—December 1944, pp 38–9, 42–3

NEW DELHI, *2 December 1943*

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have to reply to your Excellency's letter of the 16th November[1] about post-war recruitment to the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police, in which you have raised certain general questions about the strength of the Services and the possibility of preserving continuity of experience. I quite agree that the Service position is weak at the present moment. The strength of the Services has always been adjusted to peace time requirements on the most economical lines possible. The demands imposed on us by the War have resulted in stripping the Provinces of a good many higher officers who would otherwise have been available for provincial administration and there has been a considerable drain on the Services, both Central and Provincial, to fill posts in military service. At the same time permanent recruitment to the Services has largely been suspended in order to reserve posts to be filled after the war by candidates with war service. The latter measure was pressed upon us as a means of helping the flow of candidates for commissions in the fighting services, a need which was represented as paramount. Finally, at the end of the war a large number of officers will wish to take leave or retire and owing to the interruption of recruitment we shall be short of trained officers to take their places.

2. The simplest way of looking at the problem is to regard it for the moment solely as a question of man-power. With a very limited amount of man-power available there has been competition throughout the war between civil and military demands and the latter have always been regarded as having absolute priority. We are, therefore, now discovering the consequences in the civil administration. Given the fact that there is not enough man-power to go round either here or at home, our task is to strike a suitable balance between rival claims, even if it means some reversal of past policy. In considering long-term and short-term solution[s], however, we can, I think, draw a clear distinction between the man-power position after the war and that obtaining during the war period.

3. After the war, or at any rate as soon as demobilization commences, the man-power difficulty as such will cease to exist. There will be an abundant supply of men of all sorts both in India and at home who will be only too glad to obtain any employment open to them. The difficulty as regards India is that

most of them will have no experience which will make them useful, at any rate in the more responsible posts, for a considerable time to come. There may, however, be an exception in the case of specialist officers, for I imagine that a good many officers who have obtained experience in special branches of work at home could without much difficulty be released after the war and, for the purpose of similar work here, their lack of Indian experience would not be a great disadvantage or could soon be rectified. The main point of doubt about any post-war programme is the question of British policy towards India. How long do we expect British responsibility to remain? Does the Secretary of State propose to resume recruitment of his own Services after the War and, if so, for what purpose and for what period? Has he considered their future strength, organization and racial composition? Until we have some idea of his intentions in this respect it is very difficult to know our target or to embark on any long-term planning. I think, therefore, that it would be distinctly useful at this stage to address the India Office as suggested in the papers[2] accompanying my note[3] of the 6th November. So far as other aspects of post-war service planning are concerned we shall have to ask both the Provinces and the Central Government Departments to make a survey of the position and to estimate the strength which will be required to form properly staffed Services of all kinds for post-war administration. But this is a long-term problem and it is not the most urgent matter at the moment.

* * *

12. This is not, however, all that I meant when I mentioned at the end of paragraph 3 of this letter that a survey of the position would be necessary in order to estimate the strength needed in the future for properly staffed services of all kinds. We must, I agree, contemplate that for a long time after the war both the administrative and specialist services will need to be reorganized on a much more lavish scale than anything which we permitted ourselves before the war. We shall no doubt need much larger and more elaborate services for purpose of economic controls of all kinds as well as for the various social services, such as medical, public health, educational, agricultural, industrial and social welfare of all kinds, if India is to keep abreast of modern conditions and improve its standard of living. In present man-power conditions we can do no more than try to lay the foundations of such services and deal at present with the most pressing requirements. But our ideas should not be limited by what we can now do and it is time to start planning for the future without such limitations. No doubt the work of the various Reconstruction Committees will help in framing such plans and possibly we may require advice or up-to-date information from home. But a thorough overhaul of the whole structure of the

[1] This letter sought Sir R. Maxwell's advice on ideas similar to those discussed in No. 238, para. 7. Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 27–8.

[2 and 3] Not printed.

administration will be required, and it should not be found [? bound] by pre-war conceptions of the strength, character, composition or organisation of the public services. On the other hand it should take full account of the possibility of further constitutional chances [? changes] and the need of adapting the administrative machinery to a different form of government. I do not think it is too soon either for us or for the Secretary of State to embark on a serious consideration of this post-war problem, and to keep it in view may well help us in working out our present plans.

Yours sincerely,

R. M. MAXWELL

250

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *3 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

There is nothing special from you to answer this week. I have been occupied mainly with food and with my tour to the Punjab and the North-West Frontier Province.

2. I still have no news about the Bengal Governorship. At the routine Council meeting on the 1st December we heard a statement by Braund who is one of the Judges of the Allahabad High Court, but [has] been employed for some time as an Executive Officer—first on the Burma evacuation, and latterly as Regional Food Commissioner in Eastern India. Braund said that the control of the Central Government in Bengal was not nearly direct enough. His own appointment was connected with the original "basic plan",[1] and his functions were really those of liaison officer and nothing more. The problems facing the Bengal Government were large and difficult and the prospect of a good *Aman* crop must not be allowed to obscure their real character. The causes of the breakdown this autumn were still present—lack of confidence, the dislocation of the normal distribution system, political rancour, and greed—and while we might expect temporary relief during the next three or four months, there would inevitably be another breakdown towards the middle of 1944 unless the Bengal Government established a civil supplies system capable of arranging the distribution of food to sixty million people. A large organisation working on business lines was needed; it would have to provide for procurement, movements and distribution, urban rationing, the supply of consumers' goods required by the cultivators, enforcement, and public relations, and would thus

consist of half-a-dozen departments under a single control. He had advised in July last, and must advise again, that until Bengal got down to administrative reality there could be no permanent improvement. He could see no signs that the Ministers and officials in Bengal had any sense of urgency or reality. While things seemed desperate they were glad to receive any help offered them; but they now seemed to be relapsing into complacency; and he had recently found a tendency to disregard his suggestions. When two good businessmen from the Supply Department were made available the Bengal Government had found employment for only one of them, and that too, after considerable delay. Meanwhile the first stage of rationing in greater Calcutta was being postponed from month to month, and it seemed to him unwise to expect satisfactory results from a rationing scheme for three to four million people without a far stronger staff. His concrete suggestion was that, without any constitutional change, the Regional Food Commissioner should be given authority to speak not merely as a liaison officer but as a representative of the Central Government.

I had met Braund before, but had not seen much of him, and I cannot be sure of his capacity and judgment. But he did well in the Burma evacuation and his statement to Council was temperate and, I thought, sensible. His views confirm the impressions I had formed from my Bengal visit, my correspondence and talks here with Rutherford, Mayne's reports,[2] and Hance's estimate of the administrative confusion in the Medical and Public Health Services.[3] The Ministers are a poor lot, but the senior officials are probably an even more serious weakness. My belief is that the Ministers would do almost anything if stimulated from above by a really active Governor, and from below by a competent official team. Without a competent official team I do not see how we can hope for any real improvement. We must get the new Governor into position as soon as possible, and the proper thing would be to let him reorganise his departments as he thinks best. But the whole matter is now so urgent that I cannot wait indefinitely and I may have to force some changes on Rutherford. I am discussing this with Maxwell; there is a dearth of good senior men in Bengal and we may have to borrow some from other Provinces. I hope you are not relaxing your efforts to get the new Governor appointed as soon as possible. His Majesty's Government are up against something far bigger and uglier in Bengal than they yet seem to realise.

3. My last letter[4] was despatched from Lahore when my discussions with the Punjab Ministers were just beginning. I was much taken with the Premier, Khizar Hyat, who is, I think, much above the ordinary run of Indian politician. His assured position as a member of one of the great land-owning families of the Province makes him in some ways easier to deal with than the average run of Ministers. He struck me as being straight, sensible and courageous. Glancy told

[1] See No. 13, note 7. [2] See No. 200, note 1. [3] See No. 238, note 8. [4] No. 238.

me that Khizar Hyat Khan would, if pressed, be prepared to accept the principles of rationing and price control and even to abandon Chhotu Ram, who (for your strictly private information) had already placed his resignation in Khizar Hyat Khan's hands. I put my points very fully and frankly to Khizar Hyat Khan, and rather more briefly to Chhotu Ram, Baldev Singh, and Manohar Lal, the other Ministers concerned in one way or another with food. On the 26th November I saw the whole Cabinet with Glancy present. I enclose a copy[5] of the brief submitted to me for this meeting, as it sets out the policy I was trying to get accepted both by the individual Ministers and by the Cabinet as a whole. I did not of course use the actual words of the brief; my talk with the Cabinet was friendly and informal, but I do not think that I left any of the ground uncovered. I said that although my first idea had been a bracket of Rs. 8 to Rs. 10 for the wheat coming in at *Rabi* 1944 with a price nearer Rs. 8 than Rs. 10, I was prepared to go as high as Rs. 9-4 if necessary. I received no definite reply at the time, but Glancy telegraphed to me at Peshawar saying that he thought the Cabinet would accept the principle of price control, and on my return here I received from him a letter[6] with the draft of an announcement prepared by the Punjab Government of which I enclose a copy. These papers were taken in Council on 2nd December, and my reply[7] to Glancy, of which I also enclose a copy shows the conclusions reached. We have, I think, succeeded in making some progress. I realised fully at Lahore how desirable it is to keep the Punjab Ministers with us if we possibly can. They have their faults, and apart from Khizar Hyat Khan and Chhotu Ram are not individually outstanding in any way, but they are a real team and have the people of the Province behind them. The animosity aroused by the price control controversy was well illustrated at the Council meeting. Firoz Khan, supported rather half-heartedly by Mohammad Usman, suggested that it was impossible to control prices at all without a complete monopoly, and that the Central Government's action, if the draft announcement were approved, would be generally regarded as an attack on the Muslim League or Muslim majority Ministries, and would lead to violent political agitation and to failure.

4. Apart from the food discussion there is little to tell you about the Punjab. I spent an afternoon visiting various units and establishments in Cantonments. I also went to some villages between Lahore and Ferozepore. Whatever Chhotu Ram may say, the Punjabi cultivator is evidently very well off at present prices, and Dow's strongly held view that Rs. 8 a maund cannot be regarded as an unfair price for wheat is undoubtedly correct. Council did not have to take a final decision about prices when the food problem was discussed, but agreed with me that in all the circumstances we must not attempt to go below Rs. 9-4 in our dealings with the Punjab and the other Provinces concerned. This is of course a maximum and not a fixed price. Khizar Hyat Khan has obviously had

trouble with the Muslim League, but seems for the moment to have held the Unionist Party together, and to have frustrated Jinnah's attempts at encroachment at the recent meetings at New Delhi. An emissary of Jinnah's is to visit Lahore *en route* to the Karachi session of the League and is likely to give trouble.

5. I had a very pleasant time at Peshawar. The Ministers are mostly Pleaders and will, I think, co-operate in any food policy approved for their larger neighbours. They have little political experience and are not individually of any great importance. Cunningham, who is extremely capable and knows his Province and the tribes intimately, will, I am sure, be able to keep food well under control. I had an interesting ride through some Mohmand villages, and spent one afternoon at a march-past of troops, and on a visit to the aerodrome.

[Para. 6, on the appointment of a Coal Commissioner; and para. 7, on the appointment of an Adviser to the Governer of Bihar, omitted.]

8. I sent you a private telegram[8] the other day about my attempt to reduce the number and length of telegrams, and I hope that you will help by drawing attention to any lapses at this end. One particularly bad lapse at your end is, I suggest, your telegram No. 27374,[9] dated 28th November 1943, which deals with the measures necessary to remedy inflation. Most of the suggestions made in this telegram are, if I may say so, elementary, and merely cause annoyance to people such as Raisman and Gregory who have been wrestling with the problem for the past three or four years. Raisman points out that he cannot push direct taxes beyond what "respectable public opinion" will stand. By this he means that up to a point the average man does not deliberately evade payment of his direct taxes. Beyond that point evasion begins, and it is impossible to secure an increasing yield in the face of almost universal opposition. Apart from the annoyance caused to the experts here, which perhaps does not very much matter, the substance of the telegram could have been expressed in less than a quarter of the number of words actually used.

9. The Generalissimo and Madame seem to have slipped through our fingers again.[10] We were told through Mountbatten's staff that they were passing through India on the return journey, and that the Generalissimo would inspect Chinese troops at Ledo by arrangement with the Supreme Commander. I intend to write to you separately[11] about the discourtesy shown to us in this matter. In the circumstances there was of course nothing to be done by way of hospitality, but on principle it is surely proper that we should be informed if the head of a neighbour State intends to pass through India, and it is unusual for a foreign visitor to inspect troops in another country without notice to, and formal permission from, that country's Government. I am not interested in

5, 6 and 7 Not printed. [8] No. 245. [9] See No. 242, note 6. [10] See No. 30, note 15.
[11] See Lord Wavell's tel. 2663–S of 6 December. L/PO/10/17.

formalities, but a certain decency is required in international as in individual relationships.

10. You will have had my recent telegram[12] about the Home and Finance Memberships. I am satisfied that Twynam knows what he is about, but I am not quite sure how he would go down with Indian colleagues. However, he seems to be the best choice for the Home Department. The Finance Department choice is much more difficult. My own inclination is to take Mudaliar if the Cabinet will agree, but it is useless to suggest him if they will not. Raisman asked me about his future last evening, and I gave him in strict confidence the substance of what I had telegraphed to you. He agreed that Indians must take over their Finances before long, and that while the present was not a very happy time to do it he could see no better time coming, and that Mudaliar was the best Indian available.[13]

11. The news about Herbert is very bad indeed, and the end cannot now be long delayed. I warned you of this some little time ago when the doctors reported that there was no hope.

12. I set off on tour again on 11th December: this time to Orissa and Assam. On my return journey from Assam I shall visit Dacca and Calcutta and hope to make the usual speech to the Associated Chambers of Commerce on the 20th December. I should be back in New Delhi on the 21st December and shall probably be here until the 17th January. My wife accompanies me on the December tour.

13. I have just received your letters of November 11th[14] and 19th.[15] I do not think there is anything in them requiring an immediate reply, and I will answer them next week.

[12] No. 244.

[13] In tel. 2650–S of 4 December Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery in the sense of the two concluding sentences of this para. L/PO/8/52b: f 139.

[14] No. 226; the date should be 12 November. [15] No. 234.

251

The Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawanagar to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Wavell Papers. Official Correspondence: India, October 1943–December 1944, pp 47–9

THE PALACE, JAMNAGAR, KATHIAWAR, *5 December 1943*

Your Excellency,

Permit me to convey to Your Excellency the grateful appreciation of the Indian Princes for the courageous and effective manner in which you have been

pleased to grapple the serious food problem in the country. It is an earnest, if I may say so, of what is expected of Your Excellency with your rare combination of the quick decision of a Commander with the farsight of a statesman.

2. Out of deference to Your Excellency's heavy preoccupation with the food and other pressing problems, I have not approached you so far in respect of certain outstanding questions concerning the Indian Princes and the States. I owe it, however, to Your Excellency as the Crown Representative, now that you may soon be settling down to tackle other problems of the State, to approach you with a few urgent matters which were taken up with Your Excellency's predecessor and were left over to be implemented early by Your Excellency. I crave Your Excellency's indulgence for these items.

3. At the outset, permit [me] to reiterate the reference made on behalf of the Princes of India, at the last Session of the Chamber of Princes in our reply to the Viceroy's Address, to Your Excellency's appointment as the Viceroy and Crown Representative. The Princes stated that "We honour him (Your Excellency) as the proud hero of one of the turning points in the history of this war. We admire the rare combination of the soldier and the statesman, which he typifies in his personality. We shall welcome him as a friend, but we welcome his appointment in particular as an indication that England does not wish to let down those who have stood by her in the crisis."[1]

At the same time, let me assure Your Excellency of the fullest and unconditional co-operation of the Indian Princes and their States, under the flag of His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor, for an early and successful termination of the war. Your Excellency may depend on it that as in the past the Indian Princes shall spare nothing which they can offer for the cause of the Empire and the defence of their Motherland.

4. The Indian Princes have tried to postpone, as far as possible, any controversial questions which may be inconvenient to consider in the duration of the war, particularly at a time when the war had not emerged from its darkest and most critical phase. Nevertheless, I would be failing in my duty if I did not apprise Your Excellency, as the Crown Representative, at the earliest possible opportunity, of the *grave* misapprehensions and misgivings which unfortunately prevail at present in the minds of the Princes and call for an early, free and frank consultation. In this connection, I venture to invite Your Excellency's consideration to paragraph 17 of the Princes' Reply delivered at the last Session of the Chamber of Princes which reads as follows:—

> "Your Excellency has been pleased to refer to the suggestion made to you that the immense aggregate importance of the States as an element in the Indian continent, and their vital concern in the solution of Indian problems

[1] *Proceedings of the Meetings of the Chamber of Princes* 14 and 15 October 1943 (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), p. 52.

have not always been fully appreciated. We regret to have to say that this suggestion does not appear to be unfounded. On the other hand, there is a growing and grave apprehension that notwithstanding Your Excellency's personal goodwill and desire to help the States, the rights and interests of the Indian Princes were not receiving the consideration to which they were entitled. We hope and trust that no reasonable justification would be allowed to exist for such an impression, particularly at a time when the Indian States were doing splendid war effort. *In view of these grave apprehensions, it is felt that Your Excellency's successor would be rendering a real service to the Crown as also to the States, if at his early convenience, he were to invite the representatives of the States, as was done by Your Excellency and your predecessors, for a free and frank consultation on the few outstanding questions and the ways and means to remove these prevailing apprehensions."*[2]

5. It is particularly distressing that such feelings should have [? been] occasioned at a time when the Indian Princes, big and small, had lived up to their highest traditions in rallying to the call of the Empire in the present crisis, and had *spontaneously* offered and publicly implemented their war effort even at a time when large sections in British India wavered or assumed a calculating attitude. May I therefore request that at Your Excellency's earliest convenience, and if possible in January, 1944, when the Standing Committee of Princes is due to meet in Delhi, Your Excellency may be pleased to invite the representatives of States, including the Standing Committee of Princes and a few leading Ministers, to the proposed informal consultation? I am making this request in the confident hope that with Your Excellency's farsighted statesmanship this meeting will help to remove the prevailing misgivings and will thereby enhance the value of co-operation of the States in war effort.

6. The need for such discussions with the representatives of States in respect of co-operative measures—to cite one instance of the outstanding problems—was anticipated by Your Excellency's predecessor, in his Opening Address to the last session of the Chamber of Princes, even before the Princes made the specific suggestion reproduced above, [?.] His Excellency the Marquess of Linlithgow, in the course of his reference to co-operative measures, stated[3] that "in matters so delicate undue haste might well have defeated the object in view. I have had to content myself therefore with giving instructions that the progress hitherto achieved and the difficulties thereby revealed shall within the next few weeks be systematically reviewed and considered by my advisers, so that thereafter, so soon as can conveniently be arranged, my successor may be able to initiate discussions either with the Standing Committee or with selected representatives of the category of States principally concerned, from which discussions a clear plan of action may emerge. I appeal most earnestly to Your Highnesses to co-operate wholeheartedly in these processes."

7. I shall be grateful if Your Excellency would be so kind as to favour me with a reply as soon as convenient so that the Rulers and Ministers concerned may be invited in time to prepare for the proposed informal conference.

Best wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

DIGVIJAYSINHJI

[2] *Proceedings of the Meetings of the Chamber of Princes* 14 and 15 October 1943, p. 49. The italics do not appear in these *Proceedings*. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

252

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/7/6313: ff 5–6

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *7 December 1943, 5.30 pm*

1293. Your telegram 2617–S.[1] I am issuing instructions here comparable to those issued by you.

2. I am all in favour of reducing number of telegrams and of brevity but I hope departments of the Government of India will nevertheless keep prominently in mind necessity of keeping me fully informed of important developments even where my approval or views may not be required, and when matter is of immediate interest will do it by telegram. This is essential to the discharge of my Parliamentary responsibilities which of course are not confined to the all-India field but embrace a wide range of Provincial matters, particularly in respect of the Section 93 Provinces and of matters in which the Centre is exercising control under section 126A or otherwise. Please see my Predecessor's Reforms despatches Nos. 1 and 3 of 17th and 25th March 1937.[2] I have had difficulty in Parliament over food and economic position owing to absence of official information on matters reported by press and there are signs that India Office is regarded as not adequately in touch. For example I received no information about onset of cholera until E[ducation], H[ealth] & L[ands] Dept. telegram 9856[3] of 13th November disclosed serious epidemic in progress since mid-September. In such a case information might with propriety be sent direct to me by Province simultaneously with report to Governor-General. I am grateful to you for directing that weekly food reports should be fuller[4] but I am apprehensive lest Indian Members should overlook or even discourage practice of keeping me informed unless and until action by me is required.

3. As regards my 27086[5] please see my comment in private letter dated 2nd December.[6]

[1] No. 245. [2] L/P&J/9/297. [3] L/E/8/4961. [4] See No. 230, para. 11.
[5] No. 241. [6] No. 248.

253

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir R. Maxwell

L/PO/10/21

7 December 1943

My dear Maxwell,
Many thanks for your letter[1] of 2nd December. I agree that we have to deal both with the short-term problem of keeping the country going during the war and for a reasonable period thereafter, and with the long-term problem of reorganising the Services for the needs of a more elaborate peacetime administration. I suggest the following action:—

2. A. *Short-Term Problem.*

Stage I. (*i*) Take stock at the Centre of our resources and requirements to finish the war, and to get through the next three years after the war, making allowances for leave and retirements in the latter period. Arrive at a net estimate of the intake required, by years and approximate seniority, of—

(*a*) administrators without special knowledge;
(*b*) administrators with special knowledge;
(*c*) technical and professional men, such as engineers, chemists, and doctors.

(*ii*) Get the Province[s] to make similar estimates.

The estimates under (*i*) and (*ii*) to be ready within a fixed and fairly short period. They can only be approximate, but should give both the classes (e.g. by proximate age and length of experience) and qualifications of the men required as well as their numbers.

(*iii*) Represent our views on the need for action to Secretary of State and ask him what resources he sees available from the United Kingdom.

(*iv*) Let Commander-in-Chief and Supreme Commander know our general views and the probability of demands on the fighting services.

All action under this stage to be simultaneous.

Stage II. (*i*) Collate Central and Provincial estimates and arrive at a net all-India estimate or [of?] requirements. At this point it may be possible to make adjustments between the Centre and the Provinces—e.g., by arranging to revert some officers from the Centre for Provincial needs and to replace them here from the new entry.

(*ii*) Decide how far requirements can be met by promotions and direct recruitment in India.

Obviously we must do our best to get good Indian recruits under the plan, and the main source for these must be promotions. I agree that promotions

will not give us an increase in the manpower available, but it will be easier to fill the new higher posts now to be created by promoting men already in service and taking direct recruits into the lower posts, than by recruiting directly to the higher posts.

(*iii*) Decide how far the difference between requirements under (*i*) and resources under (*ii*) can be found in India by the Commander-in-Chief and Supreme Commander.

(*iv*) Ask Secretary of State to find the balance.

3. B. *Long-Term Problem.*

(*i*) Warn Secretary of State, as you suggest, that we must begin to consider now the post-war structure of the administration, with special reference to recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police.

(*ii*) Begin a survey covering—

(*a*) Revision of I.C.S. and I.P. cadres;
(*b*) Revision of cadres of Central Services, Class I;
(*c*) Revision of cadres of Provincial Services, Class I;
(*d*) Structure of Central Secretariat and the desirability or otherwise of a separate Central Secretariat cadre;
(*e*) Methods of recruitment to all Services and means of overcoming difficulties caused by suspension of recruitment during the war.

4. The short-term problem is so urgent that, if you see no objection, Stage I should be undertaken at once. You will need someone to give personal attention to the matter here—perhaps Robertson could be made responsible if you think him suitable. Whoever is doing the work at the Centre should get going with parts (*i*), (*iii*) and (*iv*) of Stage I, and should do the drafting on part (*ii*), for which in addition to official references, personal letters from me to the Governors might be sent.[2] I should like to be kept closely in touch with progress. Unless the case is stated both clearly and briefly the point may be misunderstood; I think the Governors understood it when it was put to them at the Conference, but I doubt if officials either at the Centre or in the Provinces realise how difficult our position is and how badly our performance in the economic field compares with that of more highly organised countries. You will doubtless consult Raisman, and I suggest that Information and Broadcasting Department should be fully briefed on the background in view of the inevitable leakages.

[1] No. 249.

[2] Home Department express letter 276/43–Ests. of 23 December 1943 asked Provincial Governments to estimate their requirements of additional personnel in respect of the Secretary of State's Services and Provincial Services Class I. Departments of the Government of India were similarly addressed in respect of Central Services Classes I and II. On 30 December Lord Wavell wrote to all Governors drawing their attention to the Home Department's letter and asking for their active interest and help. L/S&G/7/283–4.

5. You will know better than I how to set about the long-term problem. Service organisation is a subject on which, in the past, there have been Royal Commissions and Committees of various kinds. Means will have to be devised of making an authoritative and fairly quick survey, without immobilising too many senior officers for an indefinite period. I shall be glad to know what you propose.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

254

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 118

PRIVATE *8 December 1943*

2678–S. What is position about Governor for Bengal. I understood from your 25947[1] of November 11th that Casey had accepted and therefore hoped for his speedy arrival but have heard nothing more. I cannot emphasise too strongly need for immediate appointment and arrival. There is much to be done in Bengal and sooner someone really takes hold the better as I do not judge Rutherford in his present state of health capable of doing so. I leave on tour on 11th and visit Bengal on 18th and should like to know position before I leave here.

[1] No. 223.

255

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir T. Rutherford (Bengal) (Extract)[1]

Wavell Papers. Official Correspondence: India, October 1943–December 1944, pp 51–2

8 December 1944

Thank you for your letter of December the 3rd[2] covering the second half of November. Although there is evidently a general improvement in the food situation in Bengal, I still get the impression that administrative measures are not being carried out with the urgency that the situation demands. Nothing much seems to have happened yet about improving the intelligence system, and I doubt whether the rationing organisation will be large and efficient enough to tackle the tremendous problem of rationing Calcutta. At the

Governors' Conference[3] you were of the opinion that nothing fully effective could be done unless food were placed in the discretionary field. You will remember that there was no general support for this view and that I suggested you should use Section 52–(1) (*a*) of the Constitution Act if necessary and that you would have the full support of the Secretary of State and myself if you did so. I do not think we can be at all certain that food troubles will not recur in a serious form in Bengal and we cannot, of course, afford to be caught napping again. Although a successor as Governor may be appointed quite soon —and in view of your ill-health I am doing my best to expedite matters[4]— I hope you will keep up the maximum pressure on the Ministry and if necessary use Section 52–(1) (*a*).

[1] Only this extract is in Wavell Papers. [2] L/P&J/5/150. [3] See No. 233.
[4] See No. 254.

256

Minute by Sir D. Monteath

L/PO/8/52b: ff 136–7

8 December 1943

S. of S.

When I reported yesterday the gist of my conversation with the Governor of the Bank I did not perhaps sufficiently make a point which he stressed—the factor of your responsibility to Parliament for India's financial condition resulting from the fact that the G.-G. in C. is bound to follow your general directions or particular instructions.

I notice that in the last meeting of the I.F.C[ommitt]ee you are reported to have admitted that the extent of our control over Indian finances is very limited now, especially with an Indian majority in the Executive. That of course is true—and not a very satisfactory position in regard either to Finance or anything else. You have, I think, had to admit in the House that Parliament still retains a certain degree of responsibility, exercised thro' the S. of S. for I., for the well-being of the people of India. Will not the acknowledged difficulty of discharging that responsibility be materially increased if the immediate control of the financial condition of the country—on which the well-being of the poorer element in particular largely depends—passes to an Indian Member not selected for his financial acumen but, because he is Indian, more amenable to local influences than a really knowledgeable European would be?

I doubt whether this risk would be effectively met by propping up a Mudaliar with an expert from this country. Tho' the latter's position might be held to approximate to that of the Financial Adviser to the G.-G. in the Federal

Constitution it would really be very different. The latter was designed to give the G.-G. advice when to veto the projects of a Finance *Minister* responsible to the Legislature: in the present set-up the expert might or might not guide the Member on the right lines, but he certainly could not render advice direct to the G.-G. without breeding friction with the Member, & he would not be a Member of Council & able to influence the minds of other Members except by back-door methods which again would breed mistrust & friction.

It seems to me that the more completely the Council is Indianised and in particular if Finance passes to Indian hands over which, just because they are Indian, less control can be exercised, the more untenable becomes the S. of S.'s responsibility. We should in fact be in the position of having a Government of India, which is not responsible to anyone *in* India, but for which H.M.G. is responsible (because its members are appointed by it) without having effective control over it. Of course we have in the past few years been getting nearer to that position: but the little more, and how much it is.

D. T. M.

257

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/246: f 12

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *8 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

No. 475

The food problem is still the main preoccupation. The Punjab Government's announcement accepting food-control, the text of which you have already approved,[1] will issue as soon as our food department are informed by the Government of India of the date on which similar and simultaneous announcements are to be made by the U.P. and the North-West Frontier Province. The Punjab Government communiqué will conclude with a brief paragraph saying that the principle of rationing has also been accepted and will be brought into force in the main cities of the Province as soon as arrangements can be completed. The Premier, as I have told Your Excellency, will also be issuing a statement of his own for the edification and reassurance of his constituents. This is likely to contain a certain amount of criticism of the Central Government's direction in the past and is designed to explain and justify the line taken by the Punjab hitherto. It is also likely to contain a passage saying that, while the Premier and his colleagues will do their best to make control a success, they do not propose to include in their contemplated programme of procurement the requisitioning of grain from the "homes of growers". This expression is favoured by the

Premier as an attempt at indicating that, while village to village requisitioning cannot be regarded as a practical proposition, large landholders need not expect the same treatment, since it is not their practice to store grain in their homes. The Premier assures me that he fully intends to co-operate and I believe he means what he says. The price of grain has been falling fairly markedly, but there has been a slight upward tendency within the last few days: this may be due to the growing belief that control is not actually to be brought into force until the next Rabi harvest comes on to the market. Rain is badly needed in nearly all parts of the Province and unless it comes soon Rabi prospects will be materially affected.

[1] See No. 250, para. 3.

258

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 116

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *9 December 1943, 9.10 pm*

PRIVATE

SECRET

1304. Your private telegram 2678–S[1] of 8th December. I have received to-day telegram[2] from Prime Minister saying Casey is willing to accept Bengal on basis already indicated. He proposes to come here by 1st January for week or ten days and then proceed to India so that he should arrive between 20th January and end of month.

2. Prime Minister wishes no announcement to be made till Casey reaches England. I am submitting to King and no one should be told until King has approved.

[1] No. 254. [2] Frozen 427 of 8 December. L/PO/8/31.

259

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *9 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have your letters of the 12th[1] and 19th November[2] to answer. I am very grateful for your efforts to secure shipping for the import of foodgrains. I

[1] No. 226. [2] No. 234.

hope you will rub into your colleagues the fact that to support regional price control which we propose to establish by *rabi* 1944, it is most necessary that imports should be maintained especially during the critical months June, July and August. I have no doubt that every effort will be made by interested people to defeat price control, and we must make absolutely sure that we are not forced off it. If we succeed at *rabi* 1944 and are not unlucky with the monsoon, there are, I believe, hopes of a very great improvement. The performance of the Central Government up to date has led people to think that price control cannot be enforced, and the country must be disabused of this belief. It would be well worth His Majesty's Government's while to give us extra special support while we are getting going. (See also paragraph 8 of this letter.)

[Para. 2, on the control of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, omitted.]

3. Many thanks for the book by C. F. Andrews.[3] I never met him, but know that he was on intimate terms with Gandhi and other Congress leaders. The difficulty about unofficial relief in this country is that it tends to ignore Government although, when any big disaster occurs, Government is the only authority capable of acting on the required scale. This has been the experience in Bengal.

4. The gift from Eire was sent through the Irish Red Cross to the Indian Red Cross, and arrived just before big demands for clothing and blankets came in. The Bengal Government had already ordered large quantities of cotton blankets from the Bombay mills, and the Red Cross are using the Eire money for the purchase of woollen blankets partly from Provinces whose A.R.P. organisations are being wound up, and partly from Army stocks. It is also hoped to buy some serviceable blankets tendered to the Supply Department for the army but rejected as below specification. I agree that it might perhaps have been better from the psychological point of view to issue a striking appeal in London. But from the financial point of view it is, I think, still true that the difficulties in Bengal concern supplies rather than money, and that charitable contributions, however generous, would be only a drop in the ocean of public expenditure.

5. I am glad that you liked the papers[4] prepared for the Governors' Conference. The discussion on food is already beginning to produce results, some of which I mention below. As you will have seen from the draft proceedings of the Conference,[5] the discussion on Reconstruction was much less definite, and the main conclusion from it was that we must devise fresh means of collecting and co-ordinating Central and Provincial plans. I have not yet decided what is to be done as I am still awaiting opinions from the Reconstruction Committee of Council and the Departments concerned. The order in which the various objects of expenditure are to be put is, as you suggest,

controversial and difficult. Most Ministries would probably give education a very high place. On the other hand, with finance as tight as it is likely to be, it seems inevitable to give priority to the economic rather than to the social part of any programme. My own view, with which nearly all Governors agreed, was that productive items such as electrification, industrial development, irrigation projects and agricultural improvement should come before unproductive items such as health and education. I believe that some of the leading Indian businessmen take much the same view; they recognise that the unproductive items can be financed only from revenue surpluses, and that if they are to receive proper treatment the first step is to increase those surpluses. I will keep you in touch with progress. With the present shortage of staff it will be difficult to speed things up, but I will try.

6. I note your views on the Home and Finance Memberships. Since you wrote we have exchanged telegrams[6] on this subject, and I have just written a letter sounding Twynam. I hope that he will accept; but he can only do so at some sacrifice, and after discussion with Raisman I feel that it is impossible to offer him special terms. As you will remember, when the pay of Members of Council was reduced from Rs. 80,000 to Rs. 66,000 per annum in 1941, the Members then serving agreed to submit to the reduction so that there should be no distinction within the Council as a whole. It would therefore be very difficult to offer a salary higher than Rs. 66,000 per annum to a new Member.

7. I have spent a comparatively quiet week at headquarters, but the spate of paper appals me and keeps me busy for many hours a day just seeing that the wheels go round. The Bengal situation shows some improvement so far as food is concerned: but Mayne's views on the energy and competence of the civil officials are still gloomy, and unless an adequate administrative organisation is built up, the improvement will, I fear, be only temporary. Military aid has strengthened the medical and public health arrangements, but the malaria epidemic is undoubtedly most severe, and the incidence of cholera is abnormally high, though judging by the latest reports more or less stationary. Arthur Moore, late of the *Statesman*, came to see me this morning and to volunteer his services in Bengal; I am considering using him as an Assistant Red Cross Commissioner. He should be useful, if he doesn't go off the rails. I have telegraphed to you again[7] about the Bengal Governorship. I am convinced that drastic action is necessary in Bengal to get the Services working properly; but it is most important that such action should be initiated by a Governor who knows what he wants and can pick his own men, rather than by me through a Governor who has lost heart and wants to get away as soon as possible.

[3] See No. 226, note 10. [4] See Nos. 197 and 198.
[5] See No. 233, which reproduces extracts from the proceedings as finally approved.
[6] See Nos. 244 and 246, note 7. [7] No. 254.

8. I hope that the Punjab announcement about price control will be made within the next few days. The North-West Frontier Province have agreed to make a simultaneous announcement, and I understand from Hallett that the United Provinces will also agree to do so. During the week the Hindu Press has done its best to make things difficult for the Punjab Ministry by suggesting that the Ministers were acting under pressure from me; that price control was to be imposed immediately; and that the statutory prices would be low. The Punjab Ministers are not popular with the urban classes, and some sections of the Press would sooner see the Ministry out of office than the food problem solved. I hope however that the announcements will be made without a hitch. I have pointed out above how important it is that if we succeed in bringing Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and the United Provinces into a co-ordinated plan, His Majesty's Government should be prepared to support us with shipping. Once we have declared that we intend to control prices, we must succeed, and if we do succeed things should be very much easier by the end of 1944. If we failed, Government by the Centre would receive a blow from which recovery would be difficult.

9. The Sind Government have submitted a full-dress protest[8] to the Food Department against the direction under Section 126–A of the Government of India Act prohibiting them from amending or cancelling their statutory prices without permission from the Central Government. They have intimated that while they are prepared to maintain their present price for wheat, they wish to raise their price for paddy from Rs. 5–8 to Rs. 7–8, and their prices for *bajra* and *jowar* from Rs. 5–4 and Rs. 4–12 respectively to Rs. 7. They have also informed the Food Department that they have postponed the introduction of rationing at Karachi. The Food and Finance Departments proposed to reject the protest but to allow an addition of Re. 1 to the prices for *bajra* and *jowar*. The matter was mentioned in Council on 8th December, and my colleagues, agreeing with me, held that no price concession should be allowed. The protest will now be dealt with accordingly, but in polite and conciliatory terms. Sind prices are out of line with Punjab and United Provinces prices, and the point is not that they must be pegged indefinitely at the present levels, but that we cannot agree to immediate changes with discussions between Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab, and the United Provinces imminent.

10. Bihar are proposing price control for a long list of foodgrains, but I have so far only seen their telegram, and their proposals will have to be considered by the Food Department in some detail. Hope informed me the other day that he was extending rationing as rapidly as possible in Madras, and a very recent report by Kirby, the Rationing Adviser, on the United Provinces shows that the organisation there is working very well indeed and could undertake 100 per cent. urban rationing in a large number of towns at short notice. The

Punjab have announced rationing for several of their larger towns, and Delhi is being made to follow suit. These are all signs that the Provinces are beginning to settle down to a proper food economy, and if we could get Bengal straight the prospects would be quite hopeful, though there is still an enormous amount of work to be done.

11. My wife and I spent part of the afternoon of 4th December in visiting some of the workers of the Delhi Improvement Trust. Linlithgow was most anxious that the Central Government's attention should not be concentrated exclusively on New Delhi and its amenities, and took great interest in the improvement of conditions both in the old City and in the rural areas. Among the urban projects initiated by him were an increased water supply, a new sewage disposal system, an anti-malaria scheme, and the Delhi Improvement Trust. He also carried out a modest but fairly comprehensive plan for the Delhi rural area covering communications and most of the social services. We were favourably impressed by what we saw of the Improvement Trust work, though plans have been much delayed by the war, and comparatively little can be done until building materials are readily available again. The Trust has two main tasks—the development of the valuable government estate which was inherited by the British from the Moghul Emperors, and slum clearance and development of the kind common in the United Kingdom and European countries. The rehousing of the displaced slum populations is most difficult in India because the rent which the tenants can afford to pay is so small that the burden left to Government and the local authority is proportionately far larger than it would be in a more advanced country. I was told that Delhi is the first city in which systematic rehousing has been attempted, and the new houses built here so far number only a few hundred. We hope to see more of the Delhi Province, as I quite agree with Linlithgow that unless the Viceroy and his wife take a personal interest in its affairs it may be worse off than the neighbouring Governors' Provinces. The Delhi urban area is now very large. The Old City and New Delhi with the Cantonment and various suburbs are believed by the Chief Commissioner to have a population of well over 750,000 at the present time. The rural area is small and a great deal can be done there with the expenditure of comparatively trifling sums of money.

[Para. 12, on Sir Shafa'at Ahmad Khan, omitted.]

13. I have telegraphed to you both officially and privately[9] about the journeys of the Generalissimo and Madame Chiang Kai-shek through India. You will, I am sure, realise that I attach no importance to mere formalities and that in a matter of this kind I would always fall in with the wishes of a distinguished traveller about his halting places and other arrangements. But I feel that we

[8] L/E/8/3311: ff 131–4.
[9] Tels. 2663–S and 10653 of 6 December. L/PO/10/17 and L/P&S/12/783.

really must insist upon the observance of the usual courtesies, and have told you[10] with reference to the proposed stay in India of the Chinese Goodwill Mission that I do not think we should entertain official Chinese visitors until the Generalissimo is made to understand that he on his part treats His Majesty's Representative properly. He would, I imagine, be surprised if the President or the P.M. passed through China without intimation to him. At the same time I feel that His Majesty's Government should have told me that the Generalissimo would be passing through India.

You may be amused to hear that a large number of Chinese generals and officials spent, I am told, about 36 hours on Agra aerodrome on his outward journey waiting for his arrival.

[Para. 14, on the appointment of an acting Governor of the North-West Frontier Province, omitted.]

15. My touring plans are unchanged. I am just off to Orissa, Assam, Bengal (Dacca and Calcutta); and I am to address the annual meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce in Calcutta on the 20th December. I shall confine myself to economic questions and keep off politics. In January I hope to visit the United Provinces, Bombay, and possibly Udaipur or Bikaner. I shall start about the 18th January, after the next session of the National Defence Council, which is on the 13th, 14th and 15th. In February I am planning to go to the Central Provinces and Madras. This will leave Bihar and Sind, and although my plans are not yet definitely settled I shall probably visit Bihar and Bengal in March, and Sind at the beginning of April. Bengal needs a good deal of attention, and a third visit in March would, I believe, do good.

[Para. 16, on Lord Wavell's daughter, omitted.]

[10] In tel. 2679–S of 8 December. L/PO/10/17.

260

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *9 December 1943*
Received: 2 January 1944

I have just had a talk with John Anderson about the possibility of making Mudaliar Finance Member. He realises the force of the argument that the change would have to be made at some time and that it would be a good thing to start it with a responsible and courageous Indian representative. I also urged the point that in the difficult negotiations which may follow on the question

of sterling balances, an agreement concluded with the Treasury here by an Indian Member might have a better chance of acceptance by the rest of his colleagues than if it were made by someone suspected, however wrongly, of looking at the problem through British spectacles. As against that, he put very forcibly the argument that in the difficult finance period ahead, both internally in India and in relation to this country, it is of the first importance to have someone with real financial grasp, whose knowledge and ability would soon give confidence to his Indian colleagues as well as inspire confidence here. Meanwhile, Monteath has had a talk with Montagu Norman, the Governor of the Bank of England, who is very much opposed to the idea of an Indian Finance Member, at any rate until he feels more certain of Deshmukh's capacity to handle the Reserve Bank. I am going to have another talk with Anderson at the beginning of next week, for we were only able to have quite a short talk this morning, but unless I can persuade him to change his mind, which is not very likely, I see no chance of getting approval from the Cabinet without his support.

2. If that remains the position, then the question arises whether to commit ourselves for a period of years ahead to a really good man from here, if he can be found, or else to prolong Raisman. Montagu Norman has got one man in mind, aged about 50, now in the Bank of England and for a short time many years ago in the Treasury, who he thinks would really fill the bill for ability and knowledge and who he also reports as being a man of personal charm who gets on easily with everybody. To prolong Raisman would keep the door open, though I doubt if it would be any more open this time next year unless there is a very far-reaching change in the Government here as the result of an election. There is moreover, the consideration that if Raisman is really stale and tired, even a two or three months' holiday after his budget might not make him really fit to handle contentious and difficult problems. My inclination therefore at present would be, if we must drop the idea of an Indian, to take the Bank of England man, if he is willing to go—as to which he has not of course yet been sounded.

3. In the course of our talk Anderson remarked that he thought that in present circumstances it would be easier to Indianise the Home Department than the Finance Department, for that did not require the same degree of special knowledge and could be handled by anyone who had reasonable courage, especially as most of the work lies in dealing with the Provinces. He did not think the communal difficulty insuperable in this respect. I know Linlithgow at one time[1] contemplated an Indian successor to Maxwell, and it was only towards the end[2] that he came to the conclusion that neither the Home nor

[1] See Vol. III, Nos. 131, para. 34, 299, para. 6, 315, para. 5, 347, para. 21 and 371.
[2] See Vol. III, Nos. 399, 476, para. 19 and 501–2.

the Finance Membership could be transferred. I should very much like to know whether you think that is a possible alternative to the Finance Membership and if so whether you would choose Mudaliar or which of your Colleagues. It is at any rate possible if I had Anderson's support the change might commend itself to the War Cabinet. I did telegraph[3] to you to sound Twynam as to the possibility of his taking the Home Membership, but I do not imagine that that need preclude a change of mind on your part, as after all he has already got a good post.

[Para. 4, containing personal comments, omitted.]

5. I have just heard from No. 10 that Casey has accepted and that he is to come home early in January for a minimum of ten days or so coaching in this Office before going out to Calcutta. That is excellent and I feel that you will have a really useful live colleague in him. Winston doesn't want any announcement made until Casey actually reaches this country, and in any case it may be necessary to let the Australian Government know before the announcement is actually made or they might feel annoyed.

6. I certainly share your feelings of annoyance about the Chiang Kai-sheks, but I have hesitated to ask the Foreign Office to take a really offensive line until we can find out in exactly what form the Prime Minister conveyed his invitation to them. I must say, tiresome woman as she is, judging by the snapshots telegraphed over here she is certainly photogenic. My inclination, in reference to the last telegram[4] of yours which I have seen on the subject of the Chinese Mission, would be not to let the mission suffer for the sins of Madame and her spouse, but to ignore their obvious discourtesy. However, I shall no doubt be telegraphing to you about that in the next day or so.

[Para. 7, on the invitation to the G. of I. to join the Intergovernmental Committee on Refugees, omitted.]

8. At a recent meeting[5] of the Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions, the question was raised whether it would be possible to make more extensive use of the device of compulsory borrowing as an anti-inflationary instrument. It was thought that, so long as it remained an incidental feature in the tax system, the scope of compulsory borrowing must be somewhat limited, but that it was worth considering whether it was possible to tackle the problem at the source when Government disbursements are made. Concretely, it was asked whether it would not be possible to make some portion at least of payments to contractors in the form of non-negotiable scrip. Discussion followed on the possibility of ensuring that scrip would in practice remain non-negotiable, and doubt was expressed as to the possibility of imposing such a condition in connection with a business contract. In the end I undertook to ascertain whether such a proposal had been considered in India, and if so

with what results, or if not, how it would be regarded. I should be glad if you could let me have a note on the point.

9. I was glad to see the prominent position given in your food memorandum[6] for the Governors to the need for increased Indian production. Whatever you and I may wish it is clear that in an effective Grow More Food Campaign lies your only real hope of accumulating a central reserve. I hope Srivastava realises this. I notice in a press summary of his speech in the recent Assembly debate[7] that while he described the seven cardinal points in the Government policy he seems to have made no mention of internal production as part of that policy. Possibly this was an accidental omission, but I should have expected additional production to take a high place in such a list.

[3] See No. 246, note 7. [4] See No. 259, note 10. [5] On 29 November. L/F/7/687.
[6] No. 197. [7] On 12, 15, 16, 17 and 18 November; see No. 238, para. 3.

261

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 131

IMMEDIATE *10 December 1943*

2696–S. Your telegram No. 1301[1] of December 9th. Finance Membership. My opinion is unchanged. I still think we should appoint Indian to this portfolio and underpin him with strong staff. I realize that it may be difficult to obtain Cabinet approval.

2. Failing Mudaliar extension of Raisman is politically the best course because it would not give impression that we were (corrupt group) European for further term of five years and could be justified on grounds of experience and acquaintance with our economic problems. Raisman is stale in the sense that he acts mainly on suggestions from his Department and does not do much prodding. But he is not afraid of taking decisions and has a clear mind. I would sooner extend him than take an outsider.

3. I have no Indian in sight for Home Department. Home Member is my Adviser on political and constitutional matters, law and order and services questions all of which are most important. The Department must be in competent hands and the only outstanding Indian member is Mudaliar whose talents and experience are mainly on the economic side and would be wasted in Home Department. Appointment of nonentity such as Muhammad Usman would be quite unsuitable. I have already written Twynam and must leave it at that.

[1] Conveying the substance of paras. 1–3 of No. 260. L/PO/8/52b.

262

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/7/6313: f 4

IMPORTANT *10 December 1943*

PRIVATE

2697–S. Your private telegram 1293[1] dated December 7th. I will see that supply of information for parliamentary purposes is safeguarded. Incompleteness of information about Bengal was due to Centre itself being inadequately informed. I hope I have improved matters and that fortnightly telegrams[2] and health[3] and improved food[4] telegrams when introduced will give you what you want. If not please let me know. There is no question of Indian members discouraging supply of information.

[1] No. 252. [2] L/E/8/3333. [3] L/E/8/4961. [4] See No. 230, para. 11.

263

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill (via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 105

IMPORTANT *10 December 1943, 11.59 pm*

GRAND No. 555. (NOCOP). Secretary of State for India to Prime Minister Most Secret and Personal.

FROZEN 427.[1] I am very glad. Before going to King I mentioned this to Cranborne who is strongly of opinion that as matter of courtesy Curtin should be told before King gives formal approval. I have therefore sought and obtained King's approval informally. Cranborne does not anticipate any objection from Curtin but is anxious that he should not be given grounds for complaint as result of premature leakage of which there are already signs here.

2. Cranborne and I suggest you inform Curtin direct immediately. Following is draft for consideration.

Begins. It is matter of urgency to appoint new Governor of Bengal. In view of serious economic situation there and fact that it is at present main base for South East Asia Command's operations on Burma frontier efficient administration there is of highest importance and we must therefore have someone of highest calibre for Governorship. I have reached conclusion Casey is best

choice. His Middle East experience will be invaluable and importance of his post there is now much reduced. I can replace him there by a Minister not of War Cabinet rank. Casey is willing to serve but has asked that he should not be committed to serve for whole of normal five year term so that he would be free to return to Australia after shorter period if circumstances required. This is quite acceptable.

2. Casey intends to go to U.K. arriving about 1st January for ten days and then go to India where he is urgently needed. No announcement will be made till he reaches England. *Ends.*[2]

[1] See No. 258, note 2.

[2] In tel. Frozen 456 of 11 December, Mr Martin informed Mr Churchill's Private Office that the Prime Minister approved the draft tel. It was transmitted to Mr Curtin in Dominions Office tel. 375 of 11 December. L/PO/8/31.

264

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *11 December 1943, 1.40 pm*
Received: 11 December, 1.45 pm

No. 2700–P. My telegram of 8th December No. 2681–P.[1] Small States.

2. Attachment.[2] Discussions proceeded on assumption that any legal flaw in this scheme would be remedied and unwillingness to extend it compulsorily to new areas was based partly on considerations advanced in paragraph 2[3] of Wylie's note of 18th November (copy sent to Patrick by air mail of 30th November) and partly on disinclination to make further use of this method

[1] Summarising the conclusions of the Residents' Conference, which met on 6 December, and was concerned with Small States, with special reference to attachment and co-operative grouping. L/PO/10/25.

[2] The attachment scheme was intended to deal with the problem of the several hundred small States of Western India and Gujarat. In these States the British Political authorities had, since the inception of British control, exercised certain judicial and police powers. Under the scheme, introduced in April 1943, these powers were transferred to some of the larger neighbouring States, and these 'attaching' States were required to admit the inhabitants of the 'attached' States to the benefits of amenities such as schools and hospitals on the same terms as their own subjects as well as to provide such amenities where these were required. The existing powers and privileges of the Rulers of the attached States were, however, to remain unimpaired. There were over 400 attached States, with a population of some 1,200,000. The Ruler of one of the attached States challenged the legality of the scheme in the highest local court—that of the Judicial Commissioner—which on 6 December ruled that the notification introducing the scheme was invalid.

[3] This para., in discussing various questions arising from the attachment scheme, pointed out certain obstacles to its extension. L/P&S/13/981.

until its efficacy has been proved by experience. I agree generally with Residents' conclusions.

3. Co-operative grouping. I am in general agreement also with conclusions stated in first part of paragraph 5[4] of my previous telegram. Feeling of Conference was that compulsory methods of any kind are not desirable at present juncture of Indian affairs and that, if and when resort is had to such methods, they will have to take form sufficiently drastic to be really effective. In meantime variety of tentative co-operative experiments would continue to be encouraged if only:—

(*a*) to fill in time until circumstances are more propitious for really effective action, and

(*b*) to provide evidence when time comes that no half-way measures can in fact provide full solution of problem.

Largely owing to scepticism as to success of such experiments Conference attached great importance to argument that drastic action, if and when it comes to be taken, can fairly be related to recent authoritative warnings.

4. We have now to consider what language should be used by my advisers when they meet Standing Committee and subsequently by Residents to Rulers. Some Residents were of opinion that we should at least hint now at threat implied in penultimate sentence[5] of first part of paragraph 5 of my previous telegram. Reasons they advance for this view are:—

(*a*) that all States concerned expect drastic results to follow Conference;

(*b*) that unless this expectation is fulfilled we stand in danger not only of losing ground already gained but also prospect of further advance by agreement;

(*c*) that we shall expose ourselves to accusation of inconsistency if we go back on previous pronouncements regarding necessity of co-operative method as means of securing continued existence of small States.

5. I cannot myself agree that present time is suitable for making disclosure of this importance and we must I think be satisfied for present with much [? such] results as we can achieve by limited approach now contemplated leaving ultimate issue for decision when whole question of Indian constitutional reform comes under active consideration. I would propose therefore to authorise my advisers to explain this much only to Standing Committee, viz.—

(*a*) that attachment plan will not be compulsorily applied to full-powered States;

(*b*) that we are satisfied that "co-operative grouping" for retention of joint advisers and joint institutions is essential to improvement of present level of administration in small States and that we expect such experiments to be vigorously pursued;

(*c*) that fullest co-operation of Provinces [? Princes] is expected, etc., etc. Negative aspects of conclusions reached by Conference would in fact be kept in background while categorical assertion that survival of small States can be secured by these methods would be studiously avoided.

6. I shall be glad to know by earliest date possible if you agree with these conclusions.

H.E. the Crown Representative has seen.

[4] Para. 5 (a) of tel. 2681–P summarised the conclusions of the Residents' Conference on the attempts to improve the administration of small States through co-operative grouping. The conclusions were as follows. For the present at any rate, no pressure should be exerted towards the endowment of joint officers (the position of judicial officers being of course special) with executive as opposed to advisory functions. Experiments on this advisory basis should be energetically pursued (and inaugurated in areas where they had not already started) in the hope that the co-operation of the States concerned would in their own interests be fully forthcoming. The Crown Representative would however welcome any executive experiments on co-operative or other lines into which the Rulers concerned might, of their own free will, be prepared to enter. Inevitably in some cases such measures would take the form of the complete merger or fusion of petty units, either into a large State or a Province of British India, or with a group of States of moderate size. Unless in the very near future substantial results were achieved by these methods it was considered certain that such merger or fusion would in many cases have to be imposed as an Act of State which would be fully justified in view of recent authoritative warnings that States must make themselves worthy of protection and that their guarantees of perpetuation would be interpreted from that point of view. L/PO/10/25.

[5] i.e. last sentence of note 4 above.

265

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&S/13/981: f 310

IMMEDIATE *11 December 1943*

PRIVATE

2701–S.[1] See my telegram 2700–P of December 11th which is result of conference with Residents. It simply amounts to marking time. We shall have to come out into the open with Princes sooner or later. We are at present being dishonest in pretending we can maintain all these small States, knowing full well that in practice we shall be unable to. Princes are realising that we are not being straight about it and Political Department will have a difficult conference in January. I agree that we cannot have show-down at present but will submit some ideas on problem early next year.

[1] Wavell Papers, Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6 give the tel. no. as 2702–S.

266

Mr Churchill's Private Office to Mr Martin (via Air Ministry and Mediterranean Air Command Post, La Marsa)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 91

IMMEDIATE *15 December 1943, 11.15 pm*

GRAND 607. Personal and secret following for Martin from Private Office.

Reference FROZEN 456.[1] Following received from Mr. Curtin.

Begins. Many thanks for your telegram No. 375[2] (GRAND No. 555) advising me that you propose to appoint Casey as Governor of Bengal. *Ends*.

1 and 2 See No. 263, note 2.

267

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

VICEROY'S CAMP, SHILLONG, *16 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

This letter is from Shillong and cannot catch the bag of the 17th December. But it may as well take its place in the weekly series and go with its successor on the 24th if there is no earlier opportunity. Touring by air has many advantages, and I have to put up with the inevitable delay in the delivery of bags to and from New Delhi. Matters requiring immediate orders are referred to me by telegram, but papers catch me up and are returned to New Delhi at irregular intervals as opportunity offers.

[Para. 2, on matters relating to Indian seamen, omitted.]

3. We flew to Orissa on the 11th December and stayed with the Lewises at Cuttack. We both visited the Government Farm, the lines of the Madras Regiment, the Canteen for troops and the General Hospital, at Cuttack, and my wife saw in addition the principal Girls' school, and the Maternity and Child Welfare Centre. The Cuttack institutions seemed to me to be well run, though the Farm and the Hospital (the latter has a medical school attached to it) are naturally smaller than similar institutions at other provincial capitals. The Farm concentrates largely on the improvement of rice and sugar-cane, and its importance does not yet seem to be fully appreciated by the local landowners; or I think by the Provincial Government who seemed to me to be inclined to disparage its activities, though the Governor backs it fully.

I interviewed the Ministers and the senior officials. The Maharaja of Parlakimedi, the Prime Minister, is an intelligent and well-educated man, potentially well above the present ministerial average. He is being severely attacked by the Opposition, including such diverse elements as the local Congressmen and the Raja Bahadur of Khallikote, for agreeing to export rice to Bengal when parts of Orissa were short of food. Orissa as you know is a surplus province, and as rice is its main agricultural product, and its only "cash" as well as subsistence crop, it must export rice both in bad years and in good. Lewis thinks Parlakimedi acted courageously and sensibly in allowing exports to Bengal, and that a more conservative policy would not have affected conditions in the famine districts where, as in Bengal, price was probably a more important factor than scarcity. Parlakimedi's colleagues, Godavaris Misra, and A. S. Khan, are not particularly impressive. The senior officials seem quite good though Orissa suffers from sharing joint cadres with Bihar for the I.C.S. and the Indian Police. Officers are posted there for periods of four years at a time and it is not easy for Lewis to get exactly the men he wants. Apart from this, the climate is bad and some men cannot stand up to it and have to leave before their time is up. In spite of these difficulties there seemed to be much more life in the services than there is in Bengal. The District officials I saw, Indian and British, seemed good and active.

We spent a long day on a visit to the Ganjam District where distress has been acute among certain sections of the people. We saw a number of free kitchens, where the food supplied was considerably better, both in quantity and in quality, than the food I saw being distributed in the Contai sub-division of Bengal and in Calcutta on my first tour. Some of the kitchens are directly managed by Government, but many of them are being run by non-official organisations such as the Orissa Relief Committee, and a committee of local merchants. Each kitchen serves a specified group of villages and there are proper arrangements for registering those who attend. Most of the people being fed were women and children and old men. There are a good many children—probably several hundred—whose parents have died or who have been abandoned, and who will have to be looked after indefinitely. Lewis has a scheme for the establishment of orphanages for Ganjam and Balasore, the two districts most affected, and I have promised him a grant of Rs. 1,00,000 from my Distress Relief Fund. Attendance at the free kitchens is falling off, and as the *Aman* paddy crop is good in Orissa as in Bengal, it seems likely that conditions will begin to approach normal within a few weeks. A proper civil supplies organisation is being established with a responsible officer in each district; and Lewis is alive to the need for energetic administrative measures to keep prices down. Prices are at present being controlled at a level very much lower than that permitted in Bengal.

We spent another long day in a visit to Bhubaneshwar and Puri and to

one or two villages. This was largely a sight-seeing expedition, but we were received in a very friendly way both by the temple authorities and by the villages.

My general impression of Orissa is that it is a most friendly province in which the officials are on good terms with one another and with the leading Indians. On the other hand, extremes of wealth and poverty are very obvious, and the big landowners such as Parlakimedi and Khallikote, though some of them are I believe quite good landlords, are very far removed in outlook from their tenants and labourers. Incidentally these two, the most influential men in the Province, are at personal odds; Khallikote was burning to pour into my ears all the iniquities of the Government of which his rival is head. He is a member of the Defence Council, and I suspect that he hopes to find me more receptive at Delhi. There is still a considerable aboriginal population in the hills, and I was told that these people fend for themselves very well in their own surroundings but do not settle down readily to an ordinary agricultural life in the plains. Although Oriya sentiment is strong it seems doubtful if a province made up of six districts, some of which are very poor indeed, has long-term future. Ideally the Oriya districts and some—or all—of the Eastern States should perhaps be one administrative unit; this should not be outside scope of practical politics; but politics in India are more sentimental than practical.

4. We left Cuttack on the 15th December and arrived at Shillong on the same day. I have been busy interviewing the Ministers here, and will write to you more fully about Assam next week.

5. Conditions in Bengal seem to be improving, though the Malaria epidemic is severe, and the Ministers are still boggling over the appointment of retailers for the rationing of Calcutta. Suhrawardy does not wish to use the trade at all, and wants distribution to be made through Government shops only. Disputes about the selection of people to run the Government shops delayed their establishment, and a suggestion from me to Rutherford that he might well insist on the trade being employed to the extent necessary to get the rationing scheme working met only with the counter-suggestion that the Government of India might assume direct responsibility for the rationing scheme.[1] I will talk to Rutherford about this when I am in Calcutta on the 19th and 20th December.

I am very glad that the appointment of the new Governor has been definitely settled.[2] I hope the announcement will not be delayed, for there has obviously been leakage, I suppose in Cairo, and the newspapers have made mention of the appointment already. One of the Assam Ministers asked me at once when Casey's appointment would be announced; and it is embarrassing to have to do "idiot boy" about it. I telegraphed[3] to you saying that I would welcome the

employment of Keith Murray in Bengal for three months, and that if the new Governor will earmark the Indian Army officers he has in mind for possible employment he could send for them after his arrival. I will let him know as soon as I can about the personal staff.

6. We were very sorry indeed to hear of Herbert's death on the 11th December. He must have had a miserable time since he fell ill, and I know that the state of Bengal was much on his mind. The leading newspapers, including the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, wrote generously about him and this must be some comfort to Lady Mary. My wife and I will attend the memorial service in Calcutta next Sunday.

7. The Punjab Government duly published their announcement about price control and rationing on the 13th December.[4] I presume the North-West Frontier Province and United Provinces governments did the same though I have not actually seen their announcements in the press. The *Statesman* rather surprisingly patted the Punjab Ministers on the back in a friendly leading article which may do good. The Punjab Premier was anxious to send out with the official announcement an announcement of his own saying that no requisitioning from the homes of the growers was contemplated. I asked Glancy by telegram to do all he could to prevent a sweeping statement of this kind being made, but he did not succeed. The Punjab Ministers may not, in a legal sense, have divested themselves of the right to requisition from the homes of the growers, but they have probably opened the door to evasion of control, for dealers will merely have to leave grain with the growers to secure a virtual exemption. I have from the first made it clear that I do not regard wholesale village to village requisitioning as a practical proposition, but the right to requisition must of course be retained.

The Sind Government did not like the refusal of the Government of India[5] to accept their protest against the direction under Section 126–A of the Government of India Act. Dow tells me that at a recent Cabinet Meeting there was some talk of defiance, but later it was decided to ask Hutchings, the Food Secretary, to fly to Karachi for further discussion. Hutchings is I believe now in Karachi, and I shall doubtless be consulted before any change in the Government of India's policy is proposed. The point is that if, as we hope, Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and the United Provinces are to have a uniform price policy it would be very much better for Sind to refrain from any immediate price changes.

[1] Wavell to Rutherford, tel. 2688–S of 9 December 1943; Rutherford to Wavell, tel. 235 of 13 December 1943. In the latter Sir T. Rutherford remarked that 'I agreed to Government shops as I did not feel this was a matter of principle which by any stretch of interpretation could be brought under Section 52–(1) (*a*).' Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 52–3.

[2] See No. 258. [3] Not printed. [4] See No. 259, para. 8. [5] See No. 259, para. 9.

8. I am most grateful for your efforts about the Coal Commissioner,[6] and hope there may be no further hitch. I intend to alight at Asansol on my way back to New Delhi, to visit one of the mines, as open personal interest by me in the production problem may be good. I hope to see more of the coalfields when I visit Bihar, probably in March.

9. We move from here on the 18th to Dacca for one night, and thence to Calcutta for two nights. I have to speak at the Chambers of Commerce on the 20th, I shall deal with economic problems only and not touch on politics. I have already told you that I shall tour to the United Provinces and Bombay in the second half of January. I have just decided to visit Madras and the Central Provinces in the second half of February. A visit to Bihar in March, and to Sind in March or early April will complete the round of the Provincial capitals.

[6] L/E/8/3743.

268

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

INDIA OFFICE, *16 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET *Received: 3 January 1944*

I have had a further talk with Anderson, as well as a talk with Montagu Norman, on the subject of the Finance Member. Anderson agrees as to the difficulty of bringing in anyone from here, unless he is really first class, not only in actual ability but in standing. From that point of view he suggested Otto Niemeyer. Norman doubts very much whether Niemeyer could possibly be spared from the Council of Foreign Bondholders, of which he is the directing spirit, or whether he would be willing to go even for say three years. Lastly, he is not sure how his somewhat impatient and brusque manner would go down. But he hasn't anyone else to suggest of the first rank. The Treasury are woefully depleted and in any case I am not sure that anyone loaned by the Treasury would not be so suspect as to spoil the chances of his putting over any agreed settlement over the sterling balance question when it comes up, or over the interpretation of the Defence Agreement when it comes to the invasion of Burma.

2. A solution which has occurred to me as possible, providing I can get Anderson to support it, is that a really good, though relatively junior, man from the Bank of England—and Norman has one up his sleeve who might be willing—should be appointed as Secretary in the Department under Mudaliar. You have of course already a Secretary in the shape of Jones and it might be

difficult to displace him or find him a better post. On the other hand, it might be possible to create an additional post of Secretary and have two of them, one for the routine finance, budget, &c., and the other to be more especially of assistance in dealing with such problems as inflation and external financial relations. I may be telegraphing to you further about this after another talk with Anderson. Failing that, or the possibility of Niemeyer, I think we may be forced to fall back on an extension for Raisman. Norman is certainly not enthusiastic about that for he considers that Raisman might have done far more in the way of raising loans in the last two years.

3. This question of Indianising the Finance Membership—or alternatively the Home Membership—raises of course much wider issues. It means, in the first place, getting away from the idea that the Member should be an expert in his own subject, and differentiating between the ministerial function of the Member as a exponent of policy in the Department and outside and the experts within the Department who coach him. That is the normal rule here and the only way of working under constitutional government. In fact, it is the way in which most of your Departments are now worked outside the Home and War Departments.

4. But of course there is an even wider issue. That is whether in the unlikelihood of Indian parties ever coming to any agreement under present conditions on the subject of their future constitution, the only line of progress is not the further Indianisation of the existing Executive and an increasing recognition of its freedom from control from this country. That seems to me to arise equally whether you carry on with the existing type of Executive, or can get the kind of agreement which you were contemplating when we discussed the matter with the Cabinet India Committee[1] and at the War Cabinet.[2] My instinct in fact comes to this: that Indians will only face up to the necessity for finding an agreed constitution for their permanent future if they already feel that India is no longer under Whitehall control, but governed at the Centre by an Executive which, except for Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief, is essentially Indian. What I feel in fact is that we must somehow meet Indian nationalism, which I believe to be a really strong and unifying emotion, rather than Indian democracy which is, I believe, largely fictitious and, such as it is, fissiparous and incapable of arriving at any constructive solution.

5. What my mind is in fact drifting towards is the idea that we may be compelled after the war to take a definite initiative and if we have not completely Indianised the Executive by then to complete that process and possibly at that stage to restore self-government throughout the Provinces on Swiss lines, making a provisional Executive at the Centre from Members selected

[1] See Nos. 120, 152 and 159. [2] See No. 168.

one from each Province with two or three additional members nominated by yourself and one of them perhaps nominated as your leading adviser. All this is, of course, the loosest of thinking aloud and there may be nothing in it. But I think it may be good for us both to think aloud freely to each other in our correspondence.

6. Casey is due to be home by the 1st or 2nd January and, contrary to precedents, will not stay for any prolonged coaching in this Office, but go on after ten days or so in London. I think he should do you well and contribute drive, together with a pleasant personality. What you say[3] about the general Bengal outfit in the senior Civil Service is not too encouraging; but he obviously wants to take out some useful men himself from the Middle East, and perhaps you may be able to help him from outside Bengal.

7. I need not tell you that I read with the greatest interest the detailed account[4] of your Governors' Conference. You seem to have handled them admirably and I certainly agreed warmly with the measure of ginger you tried to infuse into them both on food and on reconstruction. I think it was a real triumph on your part to have brought the Punjab into line, even in a somewhat grudging statement:[5] likewise to have got away with so little trouble with your prompt veto[6] on the Sind Ministry's attempt to do a food ramp. Dow evidently knows how to handle his people and has now successfully handled two really difficult situations: firstly, the dismissal of Allah Bakhsh,[7] and now the food business. Altogether I was most interested in your impressions of the Governors. It is just these things in your letters that are of such great help to someone like myself sitting at a distance. Judging by all the results, my impression here too is that Hope has managed Madras very well and shown shrewdness as well as energy and a gift of talking interestingly and affably to his people.

8. Your biggest anxiety still must be inflation and I shall be very eager to know how your Lottery Loan will get on. Is any vigorous propaganda on its behalf being done between now and January 15th?[8] Meanwhile, the Treasury decision[9] to sell gold in really substantial quantities should be of real help. Anderson is fully alive to the danger of the situation and anxious to help, though inclined to exaggerate the amount of control and direction possible from this end. I ought perhaps to explain, in justification of the longwinded and possibly elementary telegram[10] to which you refer in paragraph 8 of your letter of December 3rd,[11] that this was the outcome of an inter-departmental committee and has been circulated to the India Finance Committee of the Cabinet. However elementary some of it may be from the point of view of Raisman and Gregory, it was of value in teaching some of the extremely ignorant members of the Finance Committee that we here were not overlooking these obvious points.

9. We were preparing a telegram asking for your views about recruiting for the Civil Service just before I got your letter[12] with its suggestion that instead of recruiting young men who would be disappointed if they had not a whole life career before them, we should recruit older men with experience and on some shorter term of service. We must certainly look into that, and I have held up the telegram we were about to send to you.

10. Your letter to Smuts[13] may have just missed him, but has no doubt reached him by now. You will have noticed that his Minister of the Interior[14] made a conciliatory speech[15] in which he stressed the fact that South Africans have got to realise that the Indian community there consists not of immigrants, but of a permanent element in the South African population and must be given some status corresponding to that. I can only hope that there will be a corresponding realisation in India that it is no good trying to take part in the politics of other countries, whether in the Empire or not, not on behalf of immigrants but on behalf of permanent residents who happen to be of Indian origin.

[3] See Nos. 199, para. 4, and 250, para. 2. [4] See No. 233. [5] See No. 250, para. 3.
[6] See No. 259, para. 9. [7] See Vol. III, Nos. 62, para. 16, 69, para. 4 and 86, para. 21.
[8] When the Lottery Loan was to be issued. L/F/7/826. [9] See No. 248, note 9.
[10] See No. 242, note 6. [11] No. 250. [12] No. 238, para. 7. [13] Enclosure to No. 238.
[14] Mr C. F. Clarkson.
[15] In Natal on 3 December and reported in tel. 1547 from British High Commissioner in South Africa to Dominions Office. L/P&J/8/299.

269

Minute by Sir D. Monteath (Extract)

L/S&G/7/262: f 484

17 December 1943

On the one point of conflict between the Viceroy's letter[1] and the first telegram[2]—that is the length of the period before self-government is achieved and European officers dispensed with or reduced—the Viceroy seems to be over pessimistic (looking at the matter from the point of view of would-be officers and not of Indian politicians). For the purpose of argument so as to start from the basis of the known numbers of vacancies at a date when the European war at any rate may be expected to be over and release of men in progress, the Advisers assumed[3] that the end of 1945 would be the date on which to calculate

[1] No. 238, para. 7.
[2] This is the tel. referred to by Mr Amery in No. 268, para. 9, which was held up while Lord Wavell's views were considered. For the text of the tel. as sent, see No. 272.
[3] Notes of December 1943 by the Secretary of State's Advisers are on L/S&G/7/262.

the vacancies in sight, and that 3 years thereafter would elapse before self-government is achieved. I think myself that 3 years is far too short. Even if Indians were to get together for discussion of constitutional problems in the next 12 months, it would surely take them more than 4 years to evolve a scheme of self-government complete enough to be put into operation. After all, it took 7 years to devise and bring into operation a form of government based on the well-understood British system under the guidance of British Statesman. I should agree that it would be no more than fair to stop long-term recruitment of Europeans to the Secretary of State's Services as soon as Indian leaders get together in a preliminary way, but the advantages of recruiting long-term officers intending to make India their career are so considerable that it seems unwise to abandon the possibility of doing so prematurely. At any rate it seems desirable to ask Lord Wavell to think again on this point.

270

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: ff 121–3

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *18 December 1943, 8.30 pm*

1331. Your 2696–S.[1] I have discussed further with Anderson. He feels very strongly that in India's own interest difficult economic problems ahead can only be handled by someone with expert knowledge and believes right solution to be appointment of first rate man from here. He feels we should do our utmost to get Niemeyer especially as he sees the difficulty of an appointment from here of man without an established reputation.

2. Governor of Bank, whom I saw before my last discussion with Anderson, is strongly opposed to Indianising while there is a new and untried Indian Governor of Reserve Bank, but is inclined to think that Raisman has not acted strongly enough to cope with inflation. He doubts if Niemeyer would accept and thinks it would be difficult to spare him. He admits that there is no one else in sight here who carries the authority of a recognised name besides being otherwise well-qualified. He has in the Bank of England a less well-known man whom he does regard as qualified. This man is in early fifties, has Treasury and continental experience of international banking, and is said to have great ability and tact. It is just possible that he might be willing to go out as under-pinner to Mudaliar if given adequate status, e.g. not less than equivalent of that of Secretary to the Department, and if it could be arranged available to state the case in the Legislature.

3. Without Anderson's agreement I see no hope of securing Cabinet approval to Indianisation, though I remain personally unconvinced by the objections, and am inclined to think we should have in the first instance to accept his conclusion and concentrate on trying to secure Niemeyer perhaps for not more than two or three years. Anderson would however very much prefer that nothing should be decided until the Prime Minister's return and you may therefore have to postpone decision for some weeks if possible. Meanwhile, in case Niemeyer should refuse and Cabinet were then prepared to consider appointment of Mudaliar please let me know what you would propose by way of special technical underpinning and also your suggestions as to filling of Supply portfolio which is obviously of great importance and which may raise communal question as present Hindu–Moslem balance would be upset.

4. As Niemeyer has no inkling of what we have in mind and as it would be extremely embarrassing if his name were bruited abroad, I should be glad if you would keep the suggestion as to him strictly to yourself.

[1] No. 261.

271

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/S&G/7/262: ff 485–8

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *19 December 1943, 4.40 am*

1333. Paragraph 7 of your letter of 27th November.[1] I was on point of sending telegram now contained in my immediately following telegram which please see.

2. Your view that it is impossible to reopen regular recruitment for these Services appears to be based on assumption that period within which full self-government will be attained is bound to be very short. I am however doubtful whether political outlook justified action on such assumption and if by the time demobilisation begins prospect of beginning lengthy process of constitution-making still seems remote, I think we would be justified in resumption of regular recruitment for a time, as contemplated by Home Department communiqué 13th March 1941.[2] I should therefore be glad if you would urgently consider matter further in consultation with Governors.

3. Question of securing suitable Europeans immediately on short term engagement to prop up All-India, Central and Provincial Services is entirely different matter which can be dealt with separately and without prejudice to the other. I am not altogether clear as to your intentions but presume you contemplate appointment by Government of India and Provincial Governments

[1] No. 238; the date should be 24 November. [2] L/S&G/7/262.

of Europeans on short term contracts to permit of grant of leave to members of existing Services and to fill vacancies in cadres of such Services and possibly new posts created by abnormal conditions. If so, as personal telegram to Linlithgow No. 13178[3] dated the 12th June 1943 points out, amendment of Reserved Posts Rules will be necessary to permit of appointments to reserved posts and in Provinces not under Section 93 consent of Ministers will be necessary to appointment of Europeans to non-reserved posts. In case of posts under control of Government of India it would be necessary to obtain agreement of your Council.

4. I am afraid there is little hope of borrowing men from Home Civil Service as demand for men of kind you would require already exceeds supply and all Departments here are short of administrative staff for which they are finding it very hard to obtain even untrained personnel and are employing considerable numbers past retirement age. (Detachment for U.K. service in India of even Rowlands' small staff caused grave dislocation). Appointment of Civil Servants to administrative posts in territories under military administration has now virtually ceased, and scheme in respect of employment of civil servants in liberated territories (particulars of which were sent to Home Department on 29th October[4]) has not at present gone beyond compilation of register of volunteers, without expectation, I understand, that any permanent civil servants will be available or that any temporary civil servants will be released for this until after the cessation of hostilities in the west.

5. I am also in some doubts as to meaning of your remark about promotion from lower Services. Has not full advantage already been taken of provision for substantive and officiating promotion which exists in case of most Services? I assume that you do not contemplate permanent promotions to I.C.S. and I.P. save in listed posts and as lower Services are mainly manned by Indians promotions would not meet the position if I am right in thinking your view is that additional Europeans are required.

6. I should be glad to receive information when available as to number of Europeans considered to be needed and Services or posts for which they are required. Also how you would propose to set about attempting to secure their early release or secondment from the armed forces. Men serving in the Indian Army would prima facie be best qualified for short term service of kind contemplated.

I have marked these telegrams Private as they refer to your private letter but see no objection to their being made official at whatever stage is convenient.[5]

[3] See No. 18, note 6. [4] Not printed.

[5] Lord Wavell agreed to the telegrams being made official at once; see No. 278, para. 17.
In express letter 276/43—Ests. of 14 January 1944 the Government of India Home Department referred to No. 271 and informed the Secretary of State that Provincial Governments and Central

Government Departments had been asked to estimate their requirements of additional personnel: see No. 253, note 2. The Home Department expected to secure man-power in India from the following sources: (a) recruitment of Indians in the open market, (b) re-employment of retired officers, (*c*) to extent still possible, promotion, and (d) releases and temporary transfers from the Armed Forces. In the event the Home Department did not attempt to find Indians for temporary posts in the open market. Under a Special India Army Order, dated 27 March 1944, officers of the Army in India Reserve of Officers, British and Indian E.C.O.s of the Indian Army and British Service E.C.O.s attached to the Indian Army were invited to volunteer for temporary civil employment. Recruitment was on the basis of the prescribed fifty-fifty proportion as between British and Indian officers. On 10 August 1944 the Home Department reported to the Secretary of State that 1,800 officers had volunteered against an estimated total requirement of 700 to 800 for the Provinces and Centre; of a first batch of 64 chosen for interview 24 had been selected. L/S&G/7/283; *The Council of State Debates*, vol. II, 1944, 8 November 1944, p. 5, and 16 November 1944, pp. 237, 240–1, 250.

272

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram L/S&G/7/262: ff 489–91

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *19 December 1943, 8 am*

1334. My immediately preceding telegram. Following is message referred to:

Begins. Application by Colonial Office to Cabinet for permission to interview immediately demobilisation begins and, if selected, obtain early release of number of candidates already registered for appointment to Colonial Services, makes it necessary if we also are to stake claim for similar treatment, to reach early decision whether normal recruitment by Secretary of State of Europeans to Indian Civil Service and Indian Police should be resumed after cessation of hostilities in the West. If we are to get Europeans we must get really good men.

2. Question is one of great complexity for we have on one hand tired and depleted Services urgently needing new blood if risk of breakdown is to be avoided, and on the other danger that revival of European recruitment will be proclaimed by Indian political opinion as indicating that H.M.G.'s statement of policy during and following Cripps Mission was insincere. We are also faced with problem of attempting, in competition with Colonial, Home and Foreign Services, to secure suitable European recruits without being able to offer them good prospect of life career, since it must be assumed for this purpose that on attainment by India of complete self-government European officers would sooner or later become surplus to requirements.

3. Whatever might be promised in the way of compensation in that eventuality it would not wholly meet the needs of those who wish to have a life career assured. It might be possible for other administrative services overseas or at home to take in some men when displaced, but short of a unified

imperial overseas service which is probably impractical there can be no absolute guarantee of further employment.

4. It is thought probable that during first two or three years after commencement of demobilisation a certain number of suitable men up to 30 years of age may be ready to accept regular appointment to Indian Civil Service and Indian Police despite unlikelihood of their being retained till normal retiring age. It would however be necessary to make it quite clear to candidates that career in India *may*, repeat may, be very short and in order to offset adverse effects of this it would be necessary to promise compensation and to give some details of it when inviting applications.

5. Crucial question is whether period between end of hostilities in West and attainment of self-government by India is likely to be sufficiently long to justify attempt to resume recruitment by Secretary of State despite probable Indian criticism on score both of alleged insincerity and of imposition on India of substantial cost of compensation. No estimate of length of this period can, however, at present be made.

6. Please let me have your views as soon as possible. No doubt you will wish to consult Governors more closely but they should be asked to furnish their views at very early date as decision on main question whether or not resumption of recruitment of Europeans shall be attempted ought to be reached without delay. *Ends.*

273

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to the Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawanagar

L/P&S/13/981: f 192

CALCUTTA, *19 December 1943*

My dear Jam Saheb,
I am writing in reply to Your Highness's letter of 5th December[1] in which you have suggested that I should hold an informal discussion with representatives of the States, including the Standing Committee of Princes and a few leading Ministers, next month when, as already arranged, the Standing Committee is due to meet in New Delhi.

2. I have given this suggestion careful consideration and although I agree that a discussion with representative Princes would be most useful, I have come to the conclusion that the time is not just yet. As Your Highness is aware I have, since I assumed office, had a great many urgent matters to attend to with the result that I have not yet been able to examine the problems of the Indian

States with all the care that I could wish. And there is another reason which would seem to make it desirable that the consultation which you propose should be postponed till a later date. Your Highness has mentioned co-operative measures for the improvement of administrative conditions in small States as one of the topics which the representatives of the Princes would wish to raise at the proposed discussion. I am aware that this topic is to be discussed with my Political Advisor at the Meeting of the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes in January. I understand too that it is proposed in the same month to resume the discussions about Civil Lists which were initiated at Bombay in August last. Until I have had an opportunity of examining the results of these important discussions I doubt whether any useful purpose would be served by my meeting the representatives of the Princes myself.

3. Your Highness has suggested that a few leading Ministers should attend the proposed discussion in addition to representative Princes. I am aware that when an informal Conference of this kind was held at the Viceroy's House in 1933 the Ministers of certain States attended. That Conference was however called for a specific purpose, viz. to consider certain aspects of the Federal constitution then projected for India. At a conference of the type now suggested it would I think be more suitable that representative Princes only should be present and that no Ministers should attend.

4. My general conclusion therefore is that while I shall be glad, at a somewhat later date, to meet representatives of the Princes for an informal discussion of the type contemplated in your letter it will not be possible for me to do so next month. I am anxious however to make myself familiar with the States' problems by the earliest date possible, and I would suggest that, when the discussions in the Standing Committee are over, I might have a talk with Your Highness as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes. In the course of this talk we could ascertain the main topics which the Princes would wish to raise at the subsequent meeting when that come [? comes] to be held.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] No. 251.

274

Sir A. Clow (Assam) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/136: f 9

No. 77 *19 December 1943*

2. The air raid on 13th November on Dinjan and Tinsukia caused very few casualties and not more than two fatalities, civil or military. This was the first

attempt on the very obvious target of Tinsukia, but the raiders dropped only 6 bombs there. These may have been aimed at the tank park of the Assam Oil Company but fell in a field. No reaction is reported. The Civil Defence Member when he came round was struck by the very poor arrangements made by the railway at Tinsukia, which is an important junction; the matter is being taken up with the Railway Board.

* * *

4. On the 27th of last month a Japanese aeroplane dropped leaflets on some villages east of Aijal. The District Magistrate says that they were extremely inept, being in languages unfamiliar to the people. They contained pictures of Subhas Chandra Bose among other things. All the pamphlets dropped in Assam, and we have now had several types, are poorly designed for the purpose in view and reveal little understanding of local mentality and conditions.

275

Governor-General (Food Department) to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMPORTANT
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *21 December 1943, 11.55 pm*
Received: 22 December, 3 am

No. 11305. My telegram No. 10248[1] of 24th November. Foodgrain imports.

We have received Defence Services demands for 1944. These include following quantities in thousand tons: wheat 594, rice 196. Making total demand for wheat and rice of 790 (excluding requirements of labour on defence works). In addition uncompleted 1943 wheat indents 82 and other foodgrains and pulses 224. Making total demand for 1944 foodgrains and pulses 1,096.

2. Our urgent repeated request[2] for foodgrain imports of one million tons and half million reserve assumed annual defence services demand of 650 wheat and rice. This was a considered estimate and strongly supported by Foodgrains Policy Committee. Response has been approximately 330 loaded or promised between October and February, including 130 high priced barley, disposal of which for human consumption is not easy. Imports received or loaded by end of December fully absorbed by 1943 demands. January–February loadings promised (100) are more than wiped out by increase of 1944 defence demand.

3. We are faced with increasingly difficult and potentially dangerous supply and price situation for following reasons:—

(1) Increased services demand—While Defence Services demand must be first charge on indigenous or imported grain, this, since loss of normal imports,

can only be met at expense of increased Government offtake from market and reduction of available supply for urban population.

(2) Although reliable wheat crop forecast not possible before January there are strong indications that there will be an appreciable shortfall compared with last year.[3]

(3) We are definitely committed to implementation of policy of rationing and statutory price control throughout India and in particular have just succeeded in bringing Punjab, U.P., Sind and N.-W.F.P. into line. Punjab's attitude obviously reluctant.

4. Government of India have been charged in past with lack of settled policy and determination to enforce it and failure in the coming year would be fatal. Even with full and convinced co-operation of all provincial Governments, which is by no means certain, combination of factors above would make it difficult to guarantee success of a policy which has to combine increased procurement, statutory price control and reduction of prices in face of possible crop shortages in main wheat producing block. We cannot afford to fail, and the only effective assurance lies in imports.

5. We have no desire to utilise heavy increase in defence demands to step up our overall import demand. We are prepared to stand by figure of 1½ million tons. Demand of magnitude now placed upon us, however, is bound to affect our procurement programme and possibility of bringing prices down. Continued uncertainty and hesitation in meeting our requests for imports not only increases difficulty of fixing prices, a task we must face in January, but certainly imperils, and may defeat, our whole plan. Justification for full and prompt acceptance of our demand seems to us increasingly clear and urgent.

6. His Excellency the Viceroy has seen.

[1] Confirming, in reply to Mr Amery's tel. 26505 of 18 November, that the food grain shipments asked for by the Govt. of India represented the over-all requirements of India including Army demands. L/E/8/3322: f 85.

[2] See No. 203 where one and a half million tons imports for 1944 is regarded as the desirable figure, but 50,000 tons per month is the minimum request.

[3] In tel. 11518 of 27 December, the G. of I., Food Dept. informed the S. of S. of the Director of Agriculture's estimate that if unfavourable weather persisted, the Punjab wheat crop would be a million tons less than in 1942–3. This figure amounted to the total Punjab exportable surplus for 1943. L/E/8/3322: f 77.

276

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

NEW DELHI, *22 December 1943, 5.20 pm*
Received: 22 December, 8.45 pm

No. 2807–S. Food Department's telegram No. 11305 of 21st December. The point is that there is some prospect of making an all-India food policy effective from Rabi 1944. Attempts to defeat this will be made and the increased Army demand and prospect of shortfall in wheat crop will weaken us. If we succeed there is good hope of real improvement for remainder of the war. If we fail I see little hope of getting food situation straight or of controlling inflation. It is therefore imperative for His Majesty's Government to give us all the support they can in 1944.

277

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *22 December 1943, 4.30 pm*
Received: 22 December, 4 pm

No. 2808–S. Bengal Situation. Have just visited Dacca, Calcutta and 24 Parganas. Famine conditions are much less in evidence than they were two months ago owing to fine *Aman* harvest and effect of military aid. But there is much misery and disease. Military Medical Units and Officers have reinforced totally inadequate civil organisation and Mission Hospitals and good work is being done on treatment of malaria and dysentery patients and mass cholera inoculations. We are however only touching the fringe of vast health problem and aftermath of famine is likely to remain in lowered vitality of large proportion of population. Blankets and clothing are being distributed but supply is far below demand. Immediate situation is reasonably well in hand and I am on the whole satisfied with result of emergency measures initiated in October/November. Army is doing magnificent work and relations with population are excellent.

2. Unfortunately long-term prospects remain extremely doubtful. Ministry has made little or no progress with establishments of Civil Supplies organisation in districts and is still havering over details of *Aman* procurement scheme. I fear

present harvest will go underground or get into unscrupulous dealers' hands like the last. There is much graft and knavery. Officials and people in the Districts have no confidence in Ministry and believe Bengal will starve itself again next summer. Prices of rice which fell sharply a fortnight ago are now hardening. Mayne, Wakely and Stuart are all most apprehensive and I agree with them that famine conditions will probably recur in spite of the bountiful harvest unless vigorous action is taken. It will not be from lack of food but from lack of efficient administration. Rutherford is no longer capable of vigorous action and has declined to override Ministry. His view is that no Ministry can cope with situation and that as long as a Ministry exists Centre and not Governor must coerce it.

3. [1]Rationing of Calcutta is now announced for 15th January delay being due to Suhrawardy's refusal to use anything but Government shops and to insistence of Ministry on maintenance of strict communal proportions in staffing both shops and Rationing Department. To stop further delay I have authorised issue of direction under Section 126–A of Constitution Act requiring Ministry to establish a specified number of shops and to include a specified number of trade as well as Government shops. This is however only one of the matters requiring attention.

4. What Bengal needs is vigorous Section 93 administration coupled with changes among senior civil officials and establishment of competent Civil Supplies organisation staffed by personnel borrowed from the Army. Unless matters improve very shortly, I cannot leave the Ministry to muddle itself into a second famine which owing to weakened state of population will be worse than this year.

5. Rutherford is in my opinion incapable of the effort required to get Section 93 administration started. I must therefore wait for Casey. But unless he arrives very shortly the damage may have been done. The delay in selecting the new Governor and getting him into position has been most unfortunate, and I fear that even now Cabinet do not realise urgency of the situation, shock to our prestige of Bengal breakdown and extreme difficulty of repairing it. I trust that you will expedite Casey's arrival by all means possible. Every day's delay is dangerous.

[1] This sentence, omitted from the tel. as despatched, was sent separately in tel. 2850–S of 27 December. L/PO/6/105g: f 25.

278

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *22 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letters of the 25th November[1] and 2nd December,[2] which arrived together a few days ago. I still think it was extremely bad manners on the part of the Generalissimo and Madame to pass through India twice without a word; and odd of His Majesty's Government not to have informed me; but I am content to leave it at that.

2. I am interested in Smuts' views about the need for the continued employment of British officials in India. Did he mean indefinitely? On administrative grounds he is no doubt right. But our political plans for India seem to preclude the maintenance of the Security Services on the old lines. In both your letters you mention the constitutional problem. I have been too busy with current affairs to give very much attention to this but shall have to consider it seriously soon. The outlook is not rosy. I am not sure what grounds Sir E. Villiers has for his optimism; the more intelligent politicians probably realise that until there is some rapprochement between the Hindus and the Muslims there is little hope of a settlement, and to this extent may be said to be resigned to present conditions. But the feelings of bitterness and frustration are still strong and are likely to remain so. I do not think that any good would be done by the promotion of a constitutional enquiry at the moment. If the two great communities could establish mutual confidence, the form of the Constitution would probably not give very much difficulty. The required confidence can hardly be secured by constitutional discussion largely academic in character.

3. You mention your telegram[3] about inflation. You may be amused to hear that the Metropolitan[4] has sent me a formal protest against Raisman's plan for a lottery loan. There was some criticism of this plan in England, and the Metropolitan regards it as morally degrading. I am asking Raisman to draft a suitable reply. I am quite prepared to answer the tiresome old man and point out that the loan is less of a gamble than most investments.

4. We have exchanged telegrams[5] on the status of Bajpai. I quite realise that it is anomalous for India to appoint a diplomatic representative in the United States, but the objections have never seemed to me to be very real, and I hope that the change in Bajpai's status may be approved.

5. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan has delivered my letter[6] to Smuts, but appears to have done his best to neutralise its effect by taking up a bellicose and uncom-

promising position. I am very doubtful about his suitability for the South African appointment and intend to discuss it with Khare. Our High Commissioner in South Africa should be a man who is not too much wrapped up in himself and who is prepared to take long and temperate views.

[Para. 6, on employment for Captain Julian Amery; and para. 7, on the work of a research committee exploring problems likely to face India in the postwar world, omitted.]

8. We shall be sending very shortly a despatch[7] about the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court. You will see that we have agreed to extension subject to the option of appeal to the Privy Council, but I think I should send you a leader from *Dawn*, the Muslim League's paper, published on December 18th.[8] This shows you clearly enough that the Muslim League do not like the proposal at all. It is of course natural that the Muslim League should object to any action directed towards creating the machinery of Federal Government.

9. I have had a letter from the Jam Saheb[9] asking me to meet "representatives ofS tates, including the Standing Committee of Princes and a few leading Ministers", next month for an informal consultation. As you are aware there is to be a meeting of the Standing Committee in January at which *inter alia* the question of co-operative grouping, &c. is down for discussion. I have replied[10] to the Jam Saheb's letter saying that I shall be glad to meet representatives of the Princes—not Ministers—at a somewhat later date when I have had time to make myself fully seized of all their problems. I think that it would have been impossible for me to refuse to meet the Princes although I have the feeling that the discussion is not going to be altogether easy. For I am told that the general body of Princes are in a thoroughly uneasy temper. They suspect our *bona fides* in pressing on with these co-operative grouping schemes in the middle of the war. The argument that we are doing it for their own good has, from what I can hear, made little impression. My personal feeling in fact is that they suspect us of plain dishonesty in the whole business. Then there is this unfortunate business of the Kathiawar and Gujarat attachment scheme. The agitation against this, which did not at the outset appear formidable, has now received an enormous fillip from the Judical Commissioner's decision[11] that the

[1] No. 242. [2] No. 248. [3] See No. 242, note 6.
[4] The Most Reverend Foss Westcott. [5] Nos. 241 and 285. [6] Enclosure to No. 238.
[7] No. 1 of 1944, dated 13 January 1944, enclosing a draft Order in Council and a draft Government of India Act (Amendment) Bill. L/P&J/8/458.
[8] Headed 'What is he After'; complaining of the extra-judicial occupations of the Chief Justice of India; and suggesting he 'curb his missionary zeal for extending a questionable political concept, when the Federal Court is already functioning, as an artificiality not indispensable to the progress of the country'. L/P&J/8/458.
[9] No. 251. [10] No. 273. [11] See No. 264, note 2.

whole proceeding was illegal. For the moment I have been able to take advantage of the fact that co-operative measures are due to be discussed with my Political Adviser at the meeting of the Standing Committee in January but later on I think that I must meet the representatives of the Princes myself and some of the topics which they will wish to raise are bound to be embarrassing. I have undertaken to meet the Chancellor himself next month after the Standing Committee meeting is over and I shall ask him then to give me a list of the topics which the representatives of the Princes would wish to raise when I meet them. That will give us some indication of how their minds are working and will also give us time to consider what replies I am to make to their representations. I have so far no definite date in my mind for the proposed discussion with their representatives, but I should not expect to be able to postpone it beyond the next meeting of the Standing Committee or of the National Defence Council, say about April. I am instructing the Political Department to send you a list of the principal topics which the Princes propose to raise if I succeed in getting such a list out of the Jam Saheb when I meet him next month.

10. My last letter[12] was written on the 16th December from Shillong. I saw very little of Assam, as Shillong is perched on a hill-top and I was there only for the inside of three days. But I have seen a good deal of it previously as Commander-in-Chief. Shillong itself is probably the most attractive hill station in India, but it takes five or six hours motoring to get to a railway or airfield.

I saw all the Ministers and most of the senior officials. Among the Ministers, Saadulla, the Premier, is outstanding. He is a man of considerable intelligence and character, and an astute party manager. His colleagues are not impressive. The officials suffer to some extent from belonging to so small a Province, and I got the impression that some of them were disappointed men. But Clow seems confident about his food problem, and although administration in Assam is probably backward by the standards of, say, Madras, I think the Province is getting on all right. While I was busy with my interviews, my wife visited the local hospitals and we spent one afternoon seeing the Holiday Homes for the Army, the R.A.F. and the American troops.

11. From Shillong we moved to Dacca where we spent one night. On the afternoon of the day of our arrival we drove to Narayanganj and saw an emergency hospital run by the Ramakrishna Mission with the assistance of a very capable American sister, and a Military emergency hospital. The distress in the neighbourhood of Narayanganj has been very severe. Most of the patients in the hospitals were suffering from malnutrition and malaria or dysentery or both. The Sub-Divisional Officer could give us no idea of the death-rate, and said that many of the village watchmen who were responsible for reporting had themselves died. He thinks it may amount to anything between five to 10 per

cent. of the population. I should say this was an over-estimate, but the death-rate has certainly been high, and the figures will probably never be known accurately. On our way back from Narayanganj we saw the Mitford Hospital and its emergency wards. This is a well-run institution and is the Civil Hospital of Dacca. We also spent a few minutes in watching the issue of rations to destitutes under the Dacca rationing scheme. In the evening I interviewed the local officials, and found the District Magistrate and the Session[s] Judge (who has done an excellent job in rationing Dacca City on a voluntary basis) most apprehensive about the future. The District Magistrate felt that the Bengal Government had not provided a sufficient staff for the new Civil Supplies organisation; they had sent a fairly senior Indian Civil Service officer as Regional Food Controller to Dacca but had expected him to pick up his staff at the expense of the District Magistrate. He added that the price of rice was already rising again in certain areas, and that the confusion of last summer might well be repeated. I gather that the Commissioner, Larkin, of whom I saw a good deal during the visit to Dacca, held substantially the same views.

12. We flew from Dacca to Calcutta on the morning of the 19th December, and attended the memorial service for Herbert in the Cathedral at 12 noon. In the afternoon and evening I saw Mayne, Wakely and the senior civil officials. None of them optimistic about the future of the food problem in Bengal. The soldiers who have seen much of the conditions in the interior are most depressing about the graft and the apathy. On the morning of the 20th I made my speech[13] to the Associated Chambers of Commerce. Very many thanks for your kind telegram[14] about it. In the afternoon we went for a drive round the 24-Parganas District. We saw an excellent emergency hospital run by the Army, the free distribution of dry rations by the civil authorities to destitute people, a cheap grain shop and milk distribution centre run by missionaries, a transit camp for Calcutta destitutes, and Army relief work at Diamond Harbour. The work in this district seemed to be reasonably well in hand and the Army have done excellently. On returning to Calcutta I saw the Ministers responsible for food. Srivastava was also in Calcutta and had told me that he was most dissatisfied with the progress made. The Ministers were still havering about the arrangements for the rationing of Calcutta, their idea being to exclude the retail traders altogether, and to provide a chain of Government shops. They had failed to establish these shops in the numbers required, and it seems improbable that rationing would begin by 15th January, the date now fixed. Like myself Srivastava had been discouraged by the failure of the Ministry to restore confidence. I spoke very frankly to the Ministers and hope that this did good.

[12] No. 267.

[13] *Speeches by Earl Wavell from 26th October 1943 to 21st March 1947* (New Delhi, Governor-General's Press, 1948), pp. 5–17.

[14] Not printed.

I doubt if they are really capable of energetic administrative action. After I had seen them I saw Srivastava again. He said he would have one more talk with Suhrawardy about the rationing of Calcutta, and I agreed to the issue of a direction under Section 126–A of the Government of India Act to the Bengal Government about this if the talk proved unsuccessful. Srivastava attributed the hardening of prices to a decision of the Ministers, contrary to advice from the Centre, to purchase directly in the surplus districts the needs of the deficit districts. Our advice was that purchases for the deficit districts should be made, as in Madras, by dealers working under strict control. This arrangement avoids an excessive offtake by Government, and it is probably the belief that the Bengal Government intend to buy a very high proportion of the crop that has hardened prices against them. Srivastava's talk with Suhrawardy was abortive, and the direction has been issued. Suhrawardy from what I have seen of him is all big talk and small action. But he is the dominant personality in the Bengal Ministry.

13. We set out from Calcutta on the morning of the 21st December, and before leaving Bengal visited Asansol where I went down one of the largest coal mines and my wife saw something of the conditions of workers on the surface. The coal owners are certainly going slow. They are up against labour difficulties due to a number of causes such as the opportunity for lucrative employment on Government work, the food shortage, the bumper *Aman* harvest, and the unhealthiness of the season. The conditions of coal labour on the surface, housing, welfare, &c. are very poor. But I do not believe coal owners are really anxious to raise as much coal as they can, and the old controversy about wasting assets and E.P.T. is almost certainly at the bottom of this. Benthall has spent some days in eastern India, and he and Ambedkar are taking vigorous action to deal with the coal shortage. But we are in for a very bad time during the next two or three months. Many industrial concerns are already closing through lack of coal, with resultant lack of employment; and railway reserves are down to 15 days, a most dangerous situation.

14. My visit to Bengal was depressing. Rutherford who is, I believe, seriously worried about his own health, is only anxious to get away, and is incapable of taking big decisions. I sent you a telegram[15] giving my impressions, which must by now have reached you. I have given the Ministry a fair run, and do not think it can be allowed to muddle itself back into another famine. I doubt if any Ministry could act effectively now; the administrative problems are too large and too difficult, and Bengal is riddled with political animosities. I shall have to await Casey's arrival before taking further action unless things get seriously out of hand; but I have tried to convey to you in my telegram the nature of the risk we are running.

15. The Sind Ministers are complaining bitterly of my high-handed action in refusing to allow them to raise prices; Bengal will resent my direction about

rationing; and I am doubtful whether the Punjab will really co-operate over price control. They may all try to unite against Central interference at the Muslim League meeting to be held at Karachi shortly. In fact we have stormy times ahead on the food problem, but I am sure we must stick to our guns. It would probably do no harm for the Sind Ministry to go out of office on the price-control and rationing issue.

16. We reached New Delhi on the afternoon of the 21st December. The routine Council meeting took place yesterday morning. There was no business for discussion except two weekly Food Reports and two weekly Defence Department summaries. I have been worried for some time about the food position in Travancore and Cochin where the imports planned by the Food Department seem inadequate for minimum needs. The Food Department are now trying to improve the quantities.

17. Thank you for your private telegrams Nos. 1333[16] and 1334[17] of 19th December about the Services, which I have made official. I realise how difficult it is to give you at this range a clear idea of conditions here, but I must try.

We have in the first place to carry India through the war and prepare her for the peace. Before the war, our higher Civil Services were, I suppose, strong enough to administer the country on the standards accepted as adequate. But they certainly carried no passengers, and, when the war began, new organisations, such as the Supply Department, were created by weakening the ordinary administration. As we passed from the more elementary war activities into the period of economic controls our weaknesses became clear. Not only had we deprived the Provinces of the men they needed to manage their own affairs, but we were short of the men we needed ourselves for the administration of subjects such as Food and Civil Supplies. What we want now is a reinforcement of sensible and experienced men who can (*i*) relieve some of our regular officers now employed in purely war-time posts and (*ii*) staff the new posts which are clearly needed if we are to perform efficiently. I quite realize that before such a reinforcement could be installed various constitutional formalities would have to be satisfied, but you surely do not suggest that these formalities are an obstacle to doing what is administratively right. I also appreciate the shortage of Civil Servants with you, but I hope you will impress upon your colleagues that they cannot have it both ways. If it is really important to His Majesty's Government that India should be efficiently administered (that the food and coal problems, for example, should be kept under control), then somehow the men must be found. Our troubles will not be cured by lectures on economics from the clever young men at the Treasury, nor by criticism of the alleged slowness and inefficiency of the Indian machine.

[15] No. 277. [16] No. 271. [17] No. 272.

My point about promotions in India is a very simple one. If it is decided to appoint temporary officers to reinforce the Civil Services we must obviously show, both to His Majesty's Government and to Indian opinion, that we are making the best possible use of our Indian resources. As you suppose, "dilution" has already been carried to great lengths, but what I have in mind is not merely the filling of Service cadres but a very considerable expansion of them.

So much for the short-term problem. The long-term problem which is distinct from it, but connected with it in various ways, concerns the structure of and recruitment to the higher Civil Services—particularly the I.C.S. and I.P.—on their permanent footing. I am going further into this with Maxwell.

The two problems can be dealt with separately, but they are obviously connected. The reopening of regular recruitment would do little to satisfy our immediate need. On the other hand if we were successful in obtaining an immediate reinforcement for the Services, the reopening of regular recruitment would be a less urgent matter than it now seems.

I enclose a copy of my letter of 7th December to Maxwell[18] which will show you how I have been thinking. I am anxious to keep proposals requiring action out of these weekly letters to you, and you will be addressed officially as soon as we know what to recommend.

18. I do not know when this letter will reach you, but it carries with it our best wishes to you all for the New Year.

[18] No. 253.

279

Mr Amery to Mr Casey (via Air Ministry and Commander-in-Chief, Middle East)

Telegram, L/PO/8/31: f 35

MOST IMMEDIATE *23 December 1943, 8.15 pm*

OZ 4236. Following personal and secret for Casey from Amery.

1. I have just received telegram[1] from Wavell who says that immediate situation in Bengal is reasonably well in hand and famine conditions much less in evidence thanks to military intervention. But he has grave misgivings on long term prospects and all turns on vigorous procurement of rice crop now being harvested. There is also long term problem of public health. Ministry are havering and Wavell is dissatisfied with way position is being handled and feels most vigorous action essential immediately. He therefore urges most strongly that your arrival be expedited to greatest possible extent.

2. Cabinet attach importance to your visit here as there are important Middle East matters requiring personal discussion, but in view of Wavell's pressing

request we should be grateful if you could arrange to arrive here a few days earlier than you had planned and go to India after three or four days here. I fear this is rushing you rather but I am most anxious to meet Wavell's earnestly expressed wish for your earlier arrival. Please let me know whether you feel able to manage this.

[1] No. 277.

280

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *23 December 1943*
Received: 3 January 1944

The announcement about Casey is appearing in tomorrow morning's papers and I have seen both the Editor of *The Times* and Reuter's man to give it a good send-off. The latter asked me for something personal to say about it and I gave him a few sentences which I hope will not have queered the pitch from the point of view of possibly having to introduce Section 93, for I went a little bit out of my way to emphasise the point that Casey's wide experience would be of great assistance to his Ministers. Since then I have received your very pessimistic telegram No. 2808–S[1] about the Bengal situation. I am asking both Attlee and Anthony whether they would be agreeable to Casey's going straight to India instead of coming back here. This because Casey, in addition to whatever brief coaching he might get here about Bengal, was wanted for discussions about Palestine, Middle East food supplies, &c. If they agree to doing without him I can telegraph putting that suggestion to Winston and if he agrees then to Casey. But it may not be easy and Casey may feel that there are things that he must do here, including some talk with myself and Monteath. Anyhow, you will know about that before this letter reaches you.

2. You raised the bigger question whether the Ministry should not be abolished and Section 93 introduced in circumstances not contemplated by the Act, which only deals with the question of whether Parliamentary self-government can be carried on or not from the political point of view, not from the point of view of whether it is efficient enough to preserve the public from calamity. However, Acts were meant to be evaded or overridden if the necessity is great enough and we shall have to see what necessity may compel us to do after Casey has got out and had an opportunity to look round.

[1] No. 277.

3. One possibility which occurs to me is that if it becomes necessary to introduce Section 93, whether it should not be accompanied by appointing an Indian Executive Council directly responsible to the Governor and not to the Legislature. That would at any rate be some concession to national feeling and also enable leading men of different parties to be brought together. It really comes back to the question whether Indians are not capable enough when their only duty is administration and they have a good leader, even if they are not sufficiently capable if they have to play up to a Legislature. And that in turn raises the point I have always had in mind namely, the entire unsuitability of our British constitutional system to Indian conditions. If we should have to go back to Section 93, joined with an Indian Executive, either at once or a little later, that might be a preliminary step to the eventual reintroduction of self-government on Swiss rather than on British lines. If that were done in Bengal it might be done simultaneously everywhere, except in those provinces where the existing system is working for the time being. If you look back on the discussions as to the future of the Section 93 Provinces which Linlithgow held with his Executive over a year ago,[2] you will find that there was a majority among them in favour of reverting to the Executive Council system.

4. In all this discussion of the future we link up again with the question of how to maintain the efficiency of the administration in the interval. I had a long talk with my Advisers on the subject yesterday and there was considerable support for the idea that, instead of recruiting young men from civil life to whom one cannot guarantee a complete career, it might be better to recruit at any rate a considerable proportion from the army on terms of secondment, enabling them to rejoin the army at any time within ten years if not wanted. This was very much what used to be done for certain purposes in India before, as well as what the British Army used to allow officers to join the Sudan Services for in the early days after re-conquest. The advantage would be that officers already in the Indian Army would know something about the country, its language and ways, and could in a short intensive course be taught their main administrative duties. As the proportion of I.C.S. to Army is relatively small, there might not be such great difficulty in the Army reabsorbing those who were eventually displaced on the civil side. However, I will not go into this further now, but no doubt we shall be sending you a telegram shortly as the outcome of our discussion.

[Para. 5, on Sir G. Cunningham's leave arrangements, omitted.]

6. I thought your Calcutta speech[3] admirable both in tone and in substance and it has been well received here. What you said on the political side was well balanced and I think helped to enhance the effect of what you said on the more immediate administrative issue without creating the impression that you were trying to sidetrack the political issue by making much of other things.

7. I read your Allenby[4] with much enjoyment over the week-end. It is a first-rate piece of writing. . . . [The remainder of para. 7 and para. 8, on Sir Lee Stack's murder (1924), omitted.]

[2] See Vol. II, Nos. 554, 577 paras. 12–13, 625 paras. 10–12, 666 and 672 paras. 7–8; also Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 298.
[3] See No. 278, note 13. [4] *Allenby in Egypt* (Harrap & Co., London, 1943).

281

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 118

IMPORTANT *24 December 1943, 8.45 pm*
PRIVATE

2831–S. Your 1331, December 18th.[1] I note Anderson's views and position about Niemeyer.

2. If Niemeyer refuses and Cabinet consider appointment of Mudaliar, technical under-pinning could be effected by placing at the head of the Finance Department immediately (? below) Finance Member official with (? antedate)[2] superior to that of Secretary through whom all cases requiring Member's orders would be submitted. Raisman considers Jones suitable for this new appointment if succeeded as Secretary by Coates. Object would be to give Member whole time Standing Finance Committee of one official competent to deal with all branches of Department as Raisman deals with them now. I am prepared to consider Montagu Norman's nominee for this new appointment but cannot take final decision until I know more about him and can compare him with men available here.

3. I cannot yet make definite suggestions for Supply portfolio if Mudaliar goes to Finance. (? Homi) Mehta is a possible but I have not consulted Colville about him. You need not worry too much about exact communal proportions.

4. In order that there may be no doubt about my own views I am sending an official telegram which you are free to circulate to your colleagues.

[1] No. 270. [2] L/PO/10/17 has 'status' here.

282

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/526: f 116

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *24 December 1943, 8.45 pm*
Received: 25 December, 2.45 am

2832–S. Finance Membership. I am strongly of opinion that when Raisman leaves in April 1944 he should be succeeded by an Indian. Argument that Finance Department needs at its head an expert to deal with India war time economic problems has force, but does not in my view outweigh considerations (*a*) that transfer of financial responsibility in this country to Indian hands cannot be postponed indefinitely and (*b*) that if we are to wait until all is plain sailing we are in fact deciding on indefinite postponement. Financial problems will be no easier at the end of the war.

2. I believe Mudaliar who has long political and administrative experience and has served both as Commerce and Supply Member has the required capacity, and would be satisfactory Finance Member, given suitable technical underpinning by official of status superior to Secretary to Government who would be interposed between him and Secretary. I can find such official here but am prepared to consider His Majesty's Government's nominee.

283

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: f 26

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *24 December 1943, 7.30 pm*

29452. Your telegram of the 22nd December, 2808–S.[1] I am impressed by your serious view of the outlook in Bengal and by your fear that unless things improve very shortly you will feel compelled to have recourse to Section 93. By what process do you contemplate that Section 93 situation would be brought about? Possibility of such development was discussed with your predecessor last September and I should be glad if you would refer to his telegram of 4th September, 1932–S,[2] my telegram of 9th September, 20541[3] and his telegram (particularly paragraph 4) of 11th September, 1993–S.[4]

2. Risk of decrease in administrative efficiency was deliberately taken by Parliament when it enacted provincial autonomy in 1935 and I should find it difficult to hold incompetence as of itself a justification under the Act for

Governor dismissing a Ministry which commands majority in and thus purports to retain the confidence of the legislature and electorate. It was agreed in September that if dictates of efficiency required suspension of ministry this might be brought about by the issue of directions or legislative enactment by the Centre (statutory position of which fortunately is still such as to leave Governor-General under S. 41 of Schedule IX sole judge of interests of any part of British India[5]) under Section 126A, consequence of which would be either—

(*a*) to confront the Ministry with a position which they could not tolerate and from which they would choose to escape by resignation, or

(*b*) a failure of the Ministry to co-operate with the Governor (whose special responsibility would be attracted under Section 52–(1) (*g*)) with the result that he would have legal justification for over-riding or eventually dismissing them. Upon the resignation or dismissal of Ministry Governor would of course require to satisfy himself that no alternative Ministry commanding support in the legislature *and* prepared to co-operate in the war effort was possible before he could resort to Section 93.

3. If, as I judge, conditions no longer, as in September, justify attraction of Section 52–(1) (*a*), foregoing seems to me to give some support to Acting Governor's view reported in para. 2 of your telegram in that ground for coercion of Ministry must be afforded by the Centre. I note from your paragraph 3 that directions are already being issued under Section 126A. This may itself lead to the development contemplated above, but if these and other central directions are complied with by Ministry what ground remains for dismissal other than judgment that it is inefficient by our standards? You will see that we are on the verge of some pretty fundamental issues.

4. As regards time-table, Cabinet have important M[iddle] E[ast] matters to discuss with him and cannot agree to his coming direct. I have telegraphed[6] urging him to expedite his programme and come here at once staying only 3–4 days, but have not yet received his answer.[7] If you are convinced that immediate recourse to Section 93 is inevitable you may have to consider whether it might not be preferable that it should be brought about before the new Governor takes office. Otherwise the odium of introducing so drastic a measure might be a considerable handicap at the beginning of his term. On the other hand it would seem fairer to him, if we can afford the time, to allow him to form his own judgment of the situation and of the possibility of getting

[1] No. 277. [2] No. 97. [3] No. 104. [4] No. 109.

[5] 'part of British India' was received corrupt. [6] No. 279.

[7] In tel. 1365 of 25 December, Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell that Mr Casey had replied saying he would do his utmost to accelerate his programme but did not think it possible to do this to the extent suggested. He would leave Cairo on 30 December and spend only the minimum time in London, but this situation was complicated by his wife having malaria. L/PO/8/31.

Ministers to face the measures necessary. After all, we have chosen a man with wide Cabinet experience in the hope that he can give guidance and drive to a Ministerial team.

5. With reference to your paragraph 4, I should be glad to know more fully what you have in mind in your reference to changes among senior officials. It may well be that civil administration requires strengthening in the higher ranks which as I read Rutherford's letters have been rendered despondent by subordination to successive Ministries, but you will be conscious that a new Governor devoid of Indian let alone Bengal experience will need to rely particularly at the outset on the local knowledge of his service advisers.

284

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&S/13/981: f 266

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *24 December 1944, 9 pm*

29472. Your telegrams of the 8th and 11th December, 2681[1] and 2700–P.[2] Small States. I see no reason to differ from your conclusions as to the line to be followed by your advisers in discussion with Standing Committee next month. Quicker progress in this intricate problem would no doubt be welcome but I realise force of objections to making at this stage any drastic advance in policy.

I hope to comment later by mail after further study of the papers.

[1] See No. 264, note 1. [2] No. 264.

285

Government of India, External Affairs Department to Secretary of State

Express Letter, L/P&S/12/2636: ff 130–1

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *24 December 1943*

SECRET

No. 875/S.

Your telegram 27086[1] November 25th. Status of Agent-General in U.S.A.

2. Arguments which have been given against this step are well enough known to you. Briefly they are that establishment of diplomatic status, while ultimate responsibility rests with H.M.G., may

(*a*) even with well understood convention defining allocation of business trench on H.M.G.'s responsibility;

(*b*) lead to (1) demand for reciprocal American representation in Delhi and (2) demand for exchange of diplomatic representatives with China and possibly with other countries;

(*c*) even attract criticism in Legislature and among political parties owing to suspicion that change of name did not imply real responsibility.

3. In general we consider these arguments are entirely outweighed by importance of taking steps now to place India, on world stage at least, as Dominion with independent diplomatic voice. It is far better to take present opportunity to train Indian diplomatists and to direct Indian thought from present introvert tendencies towards foreign affairs than to be rushed at later stage when conventions between H.M.G. and India will be more difficult to establish. Genius of British Empire institutions has often been bound up with illogicality and fact that diplomatic position of India was in advance of her internal constitution should not, in our opinion, be conclusive argument against change proposed. We think too that step will do something to encourage those who visualise India's future as lying within the Empire and will prepare mould in shape which H.M.G. and we ourselves would wish.

4. Reference points in para. 2 of your telegram.

(1) Ambassador has already encouraged Bajpai to handle direct political questions arising between Government of India and U.S. Government and stated that Agent-General had in practice assumed much the same position as Dominion Ministers (your telegram 5304 of 23rd March [1942][2]). Moreover Bajpai has signed United Nations' Declaration on behalf of India, represented India at Hot Springs[3] and on UNRRA, held conversations in regard to Indian disabilities under Asiatic Exclusion Act[4] and put our case over reciprocal lease-lend. But perhaps most important point is that he should secure general control over Indian Supply Mission and Trade Commissioner which other Departments here should be willing to concede if Indian Legation were set up.

(2) We recognise that in order to avoid triangular correspondence it may be necessary in present constitutional position for Indian Minister to repeat his reports to appropriate department of H.M.G. which in this case would be Secy. of State for India. We should leave Ambassador and Indian Minister to work out in practice allocation of subjects arising over India's position in the Empire or the world which would either be handled by Ambassador or in which Minister would consult him. Important change we think would be to

[1] No. 241. [2] L/P&S/2636.

[3] The United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture which met in the United States from 18 May–3 June 1943.

[4] Of the United States. Since 1924, the United States had, in practice, excluded Indian immigrants. Late in 1943, restrictions on Chinese immigration and naturalisation were modified by the United States administration to encourage the Chinese in their 'gallant struggle'. Sir G. S. Bajpai thereupon attempted to secure similar treatment for Indians. L/P&J/8/322.

supply Minister with separate ciphers. Fact that he works through Embassy ciphers has already led to criticism here.

(3) We agree that step would not impress political opinion here but regard this point as of small consequence. Whatever platform or press may say we still think substantial effect would be made on thought of more solid character in this country and that mere existence of diplomatic representation abroad would tend to direct Indian thought in foreign policies along Empire lines. Anyway what we are after is practical step in India's progress towards Dominion status, *not* the approval of present Indian political opinion.

(4) We agree that reciprocal demand would be made by America and that China might follow suit. We must also expect that similar demands may be made by other countries, e.g. in Middle East, with suggestion for establishment of parallel Indian legations in those countries. We should hope to find sufficient reason to put off further demands, except as regards China, until constitutional position is clearer, but even if they are made and conceded we think that Indian representation in diplomatic field will increase Indian self-respect, give some Indians diplomatic experience under British guidance, and that this consideration outweighs difficulties of procedure and co-ordination.

(5) In publicity field we have reason to think that new status should add weight to contribution which Bajpai will be able to make and would hope that Puckle would not find it to trench on his responsibility.

5. Presumably Minister would be accredited by His Majesty in the name of the Government of India.

6. Viceroy has seen this letter.

O. K. CAROE

The Issue of the above has been authorised.

286

Mr Amery to Sir J. Anderson

L/PO/8/52b: f 115

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *28 December 1943*

My dear John,

Please see the two enclosed telegrams[1] from Wavell, one his definite personal view which he would like to be seen by the Cabinet, and the other a private one in which he envisages the possibility of Niemeyer.

I have had a talk with Attlee and he thinks that the best thing will be for me to raise the matter officially with the Cabinet, whose views can then be

transmitted to the Prime Minister. I shall accordingly draft a short paper for the Cabinet, but in order to prevent the possibility of leakage about Niemeyer may leave the discussion of his personality and availability for the Cabinet Room. Attlee says that Winston strongly dislikes him. That might of course be in Winston's eyes all the better reason for sending him to a distant and thankless job!

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

[1] Nos. 281 and 282.

287

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *29 December 1943*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

This will be a short letter. I have nothing fresh from you to answer, and even in war time Christmas makes some difference to the flow of official papers. Not much!

2. I have your telegram No. 29452,[1] dated the 24th December, about the constitutional problem in Bengal. It is being examined by the Food Department and the legal experts, and I hope to reply to it within a few days. I admit the importance of supporting Provincial Autonomy if we can possibly do so, but there must be a limit to the price we are prepared to pay. I doubt if even now the nature and extent of the Bengal disaster are fully appreciated by the British public, and, as I said in my last letter,[2] we shall probably never know what the real death roll has been. You are a better judge than I of Parliamentary reactions in matters of this kind. But I suppose that if, on the plea that our first duty is to preserve Provincial Autonomy, we permitted Bengal to slip back into another famine, we should, to put the matter on the lowest ground, have great difficulty in justifying ourselves. I am all for giving Provincial Ministries every possible chance, and I am prepared to put up with a good deal of inefficiency in the Provinces. But if maladministration is likely to result in widespread misery and starvation, we cannot permit it to go on whatever the constitutional technicalities may be. I do not know what advice the legal experts will give me. At first sight, the difficulty of using the Central power of direction to force a Ministry into a position in which a declaration under Section 93 is inevitable is almost as great as that of making a direct use of Section 93. The trouble is that it is impossible to predict Ministerial reactions and that Ministers may well evade the issue in one way or another, and so prolong the period of uncertainty

[1] No. 283. [2] No. 278, para. 11.

before effective action is taken. I see that you agree with my view that we must, if possible, wait for Casey's arrival before taking a definite decision, but you must realise that the risk of doing this is considerable and that Casey could reasonably ask for time—perhaps for several weeks—before giving his opinion. I hope that Mrs. Casey's illness will not seriously delay his arrival.

3. Our troubles about the attachment of some of the smaller States to their larger neighbours are still being examined by your experts with the Department here. Wylie tells me that he will not trouble me further with details until the position is clear. We shall, I suppose, extricate ourselves from the muddle we are now in, but it will not be easy to reconcile our obligations to the States with our general policy for India. Wylie's personal, and at present quite unofficial, view is that the vision of an Indian Union is inconsistent with the maintenance of our Treaty obligations to all petty States, and that somehow we shall at some stage have to decide which States can be brought into the Union, and liquidate our obligations to the remainder. I can express no opinion yet on this long-term problem, although, as I told you when I wrote about Orissa,[3] it is obvious enough there that an effective Oriya Province could be established only if Orissa and the Eastern States were amalgamated. Wylie's immediate point is that we should, from now on, avoid as much as we can public utterances about the sanctity of the Treaties and the inviolability of the bond between the States and ourselves. I agree with Wylie that this is a matter on which we should be careful not to say more than we must, and I shall be glad of your views.

4. Another important telegram received during the week is your No. 29471[4] of 25th December about the American interest in India's stability as a base for the Eastern operations. This is an official reference, and the reply, which I will see in draft, will go from the War Department.

With all best wishes to you and to your wife and to Sadie for 1944.

[3] No. 267, para. 3. [4] L/F/File 6101 of 1944 Pt. I.

288

Minute by Sir D. Monteath (Extract)[1]

L/PO/8/52b: f 109

30 December 1943

C. The following comment is not really in direct reference to the sentence marked,[2] the truth of which I do not contest. But in relation to the whole of that paragraph there is the consideration, which I have mentioned before,[3] that whereas a European, even a Niemeyer, is amenable to advice or even instruction

from this end, this is less the case with an Indian non-official, even one who has no political following to consider, and that consequently the control of the Secretary of State which is the counterpart to his responsibility to Parliament is lessened, though the responsibility is not.[4]

[1] This minute commented on the draft of No. 289. [2] See No. 289, note 3.

[3] See No. 256.

[4] Sir D. Monteath added in manuscript here: 'This of course has relation to all matters that come before the Execu[tive] Council for decision: that consideration is relevant to the present issue in so far as Sir R. M.'s appointment as Fin[ance] Member entails the addition of another Indian Member & the diminution of the European point of view.'

Mr Amery commented in manuscript on this: 'The H[ouse] of C[ommons] & the Cabinet will have to learn, as it had in the case of the Dominions many years ago, that the responsibility has in fact been narrowed down.'

289

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (43) 590

L/PO/8/52b: ff 106–7

The Indian Finance Membership

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *30 December 1943*

The normal term of office of Sir Jeremy Raisman, the present Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, comes to an end in April, and it is very desirable that an early decision should be reached as to the appointment of a successor. Lord Wavell in the attached telegram expresses the strong opinion that his successor should be an Indian, and recommends the appointment of Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar.

There are really two separate questions involved. The first is whether the new Finance Member should, as hitherto, be a financial expert or should be a man of general political and administrative experience. The second is whether he should be, as hitherto, a European or should be an Indian.

I have discussed the matter with the Chancellor of the Exchequer and with the Governor of the Bank of England, both of whom attach great importance to the appointment of an expert with wide experience outside India of public and international finance in view of the complexity and magnitude of the financial problems now facing India and of the difficult discussions with the Government of the United Kingdom which will arise at the end of the war with regard to the handling of India's sterling balances and on many other matters. *Mr. Montagu Norman stressed the fact that the Governorship of the Reserve Bank has recently been entrusted to an Indian ex-official of no very profound experience*

of banking.[1] Both are agreed that such an expert would have to be of the highest recognised standing and ability. Only one name has occurred to us as of a person possessing the necessary qualifications and as possibly—though very doubtfully—available.

As against this argument I must point out that the whole character of the Executive Council has been completely transformed in recent years. It is no longer a small Council of expert officials but, in effect, a Cabinet, overwhelmingly Indian, of men chosen for their general political and administrative ability and relying in every department, with the exception of War, Home and Finance, for expert guidance upon their senior officials. In such a body the important thing is, not that the Minister in charge of a department should be himself an expert, but that he should be capable of weighing the advice of his experts and then, having come to his conclusions, of convincing his colleagues.

This consideration weighs with exceptional force in favour of an Indian Finance Member in the present Executive and in view of the problems to be faced. Any new Finance Member sent out from here, especially if in any way connected with the Treasury or the Bank of England, will be resented at the outset and always regarded with suspicion as there to defend British financial interests. Measures to meet the present financial situation or, later on, some reasonable agreement with the Treasury over outstanding questions, will have far less chance of acceptance if put forward by him than if advocated by someone whose primary concern for Indian interests cannot be in doubt and who exercises long-standing personal influence with his colleagues.

I therefore support the Viceroy's recommendation on merits, apart from any wider political considerations. I would add that he is fortunate in having available in Sir R. Mudaliar a man of first-rate intellectual ability, who could hold his place in a Cabinet anywhere, of wide experience in dealing with industrial and economic problems, and, what is even more important, of courage and conviction—including a firm conviction of the necessity of maintaining the British connexion.

The Viceroy is satisfied that he can furnish Sir R. Mudaliar with the necessary technical assistance[2] from within the Indian Finance Department, but is quite willing to consider someone suggested from here if wider experience is considered essential. The Governor of the Bank has mentioned to me the name of one of his men who, in his opinion, is admirably qualified, even if his name is not sufficiently well known to make him altogether suitable for the actual Finance Membership.

As regards the political aspect of the appointment, it is becoming increasingly clear that there is no prospect of the Indian parties coming together in the near future for the purpose of forming a more representative Government under the present constitution, or of any early agreement upon a constitution after the war. In that situation the sense of frustration and of bitterness, however illogical

and unreasonable, against the British connexion is bound to grow, unless we can in some way or other demonstrate the sincerity of our desire to see India governed by Indians and in India's interests.

The only effective way open to us is to entrust more power to Indians in the actual administration. What is more, whatever may be said of the efficiency of Indian ministries subject, under our particular Parliamentary system, to the day by day control of their party caucuses, Indian administrators free from such control have shown themselves by no means incapable. The Indian States have produced many able administrators. The Viceroy's present Executive have, I feel, never had the credit due to them for the courage with which they unhesitatingly dealt with the Gandhi rebellion of August 1942 or for the general success of their administration during the last two years. It is at least open to doubt whether an official government of the pre-1940 type could have done better or have enjoyed the measure of public support or, at its lowest, acquiescence, which they have, in fact, received. In any case they are the only instrument of a national character with which the Government of India can now be carried on. To strengthen its authority in Indian eyes and to increase the confidence of its members in themselves and in the trust we repose in them, seems to me the only way of carrying on without a breakdown until such time as a constitutional solution emerges.

From that point of view there is no doubt that in the eyes of the Members of the Viceroy's Executive, as well as of the general educated public, the reservation of the key posts of Finance and Home Affairs has been regarded as evidence of our fundamental distrust and as proof of the discrepancy between our general professions about Indian self-government and our actual practice. It would be idle to suppose that the appointment of Sir R. Mudaliar would be greeted with enthusiasm by either the Congress or the Muslim League or by their journals in the Indian Press. It would not suit the book of either of these parties. But it would all the same have some effect on the thinking public and it would certainly give increased confidence and authority to the Executive as a whole. On the other hand, there can be no doubt that the appointment of a new comer from here would not only be the target of fresh denunciation—itself not a matter of great consequence—but a very real discouragement to the men on whose co-operation Lord Wavell must rely for the carrying out of his difficult task.[3]

I have not discussed a third alternative, namely, the extension of the present Finance Member's appointment for another year. Sir J. Raisman is tired and a fresh hand at the helm is what is needed. In any case postponement only means

[1] The words in italics were inserted into Mr Amery's draft at Sir D. Monteath's suggestion.
[2] Mr Amery's draft included the words 'on the highest level' here which were deleted at Sir D. Monteath's suggestion.
[3] Sir D. Monteath marked this sentence with a 'C'; see No. 288.

facing the same decision a year hence and probably under even more difficult conditions. Sir J. Raisman himself agrees[4] with the Viceroy that if the change is to be made it is as well made now as later on.

L. S. A.

Annex to No. 289

CYPHER TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

[*There follows the text of No. 282.*]

[4] See No. 250, para. 10.

290

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *30 December 1943*
Received: 17 January 1944

I have just had a telegram[1] from Casey to say that he will be here on the 1st and, as I see no reason why he should be very many days here, I hope we can get him started again in time to reach you by the middle of the month. I am sorry to see that the Indian Press, instead of looking upon Casey, as an Australian, being more likely to sympathise with the Dominion point of view, has only fastened upon Australia's immigration restrictions, &c. All this will I think settle itself when Casey gets out, for I am sure he will make a good impression. As for Section 93, if he can get on without it, so much the better; at any rate I hope circumstances will allow him to feel his feet and come to his own conclusions.

2. I am bringing the question of the Finance Member up before the Cabinet next week and have meanwhile drafted a Memorandum.[2] In it I point out that there are really two questions involved—one, whether the Finance Member should continue to be, as in the past, a financial expert; the other, whether he should be an Indian. I point out that the whole character of the Executive has changed in recent years and become, like the Cabinet here, one whose members generally are there for their political and administrative experience and not as experts in their particular Department. After all, our whole Cabinet system works on the basis that a Minister is shrewd enough to be able to size up the advice of his experts and knows how to put that advice, if he accepts it, across his colleagues. The pure expert in a Cabinet suffers from the disadvantage that he does not speak the language of his colleagues or know how to handle

them. Kitchener at the War Office was a typical example of that weakness. This seems to me all the more likely to be the case if the expert comes from here, knowing nothing about India, is resented by his Indian colleagues and is suspected of being more concerned with British than with Indian interests. When it comes to difficult negotiations with the Treasury here later on it seems to me that if a man like Mudaliar can come to a reasonable arrangement with the Treasury he is much more likely to put it across his colleagues than someone of the Niemeyer type. I am also stressing the point that while the party deadlock in India looks like continuing for a long time to come, the only evidence of our desire to enable Indians to govern India can be afforded by something like the giving of this key post to an Indian. On the other hand, bringing out a new man from home would be taken, not only by the public, but even more within the Executive, as evidence that we have no intention of relaxing our control.

3. If the Cabinet, influenced by Anderson, reject our proposal, then it seems to me we shall have at any rate to try Niemeyer. But I might add that the Labour members of the Cabinet have, I believe, a strong aversion to him and that may influence them in the right direction! If it does, there still remains the Winston fence, and it is impossible to predict whether at that distance he will wish to override the Cabinet or would be prepared to acquiesce.

4. Twynam's refusal[3] sets you another difficult problem. I suppose Hallett would be the most obvious alternative, though he is possibly a little on the old side. I gather it would mean a considerable immediate financial loss to him as against which would be set a further continuance of active employment. The only other name that occurs to me is that of Cunningham, who may be difficult to spare from the North-West, but who I have always heard very highly spoken of for general ability.

5. I had a talk yesterday with Joyce on his return. His weeks in India, mostly spent in Delhi, have given him the impression that no political settlement between the Indian parties is in sight either now or for years to come and that it is therefore very important that we should make clear our intention of governing effectively and efficiently for the years immediately ahead of us and until a constitution can emerge. On the other hand, he has also been impressed by the intense suspicion of every Indian that our promises were never sincerely meant and feels that we ought to do something which at any rate indicates that we are in fact looking forward to the constitutional development we have promised. He wonders whether it would be possible to set on foot now some sort of constitutional enquiry, even if only of a fact-finding character, suggesting that failing Indian agreement the information so collected

[1] MOS/129 of 28 December. L/PO/8/31. [2] No. 289.

[3] In tel. 2834–S of 24 December, Lord Wavell had informed Mr Amery that Sir H. Twynam had refused the Home Membership on personal and domestic grounds. L/PO/8/52b.

might at any rate be of value to us if we were then forced to the conclusion that we had to frame our own Indian constitution. I pass his views on for what they are worth as the impressions of an intelligent visitor, and you can consider them, with many other matters, when you are meditating what you will be saying in your first address to the Legislature.

6. One point that I confess struck me was his insistence that every Indian still thinks that the Cripps Offer was induced by fear and by the hope that we might rally Indian opinion for some sort of desperate resistance when the invasion came. I have always realised that this was the view Congress took at the time. It certainly never crossed our minds here that there was any connection between the constitutional problem and the military one. We always assumed final victory and regarded the constitutional problem as entirely on its own. The whole genesis of the Cripps Offer was in fact a telegram[4] from Sapru & Company to Winston which he postponed answering while he was in America. When he came back, possibly influenced in Washington by the view that something should be done, he made sundry quite impracticable suggestions which, however, led up to a Cabinet Committee which hatched the so-called Cripps plan. When the plan was hatched it was immediately announced[5] that Cripps would go to India and I do not think it occurred to anyone to even notice the fact that the date of announcement coincided with that of the fall of Rangoon. I am speaking at York in 10 days time and may take an opportunity then of correcting that error.

7. In your letter of the 9th,[6] both in the opening paragraph and in paragraph 8, you press for more shipping for imports. I don't feel too sanguine about getting much more in view of all the military operations in prospect, not to speak of a new food shortage in East Africa, to relieve which the Colonial Office are clamouring for 100,000 tons of maize. If you really feel that we must press for more and that internal distribution cannot meet the situation, you had, I think, better send a definite reasoned telegram to that effect not later than the middle of January, so that I can return to the charge and try to see that shippings are not stopped when the February ships from Australia have delivered.

[Para. 8, on the importance of ambulance aircraft to support troops in jungle country, omitted.]

4 See Vol. I, Enclosure to No. 2.
5 *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 378, 11 March 1942, cols. 1069–70; see Vol. I, Nos. 308 and 309.
6 No. 259.

291

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/192: f 12

SECRET GOVERNOR'S CAMP, CENTRAL PROVINCES, *Undated*
No. R. 183–G.C.P.

6. I have been following with interest the proceedings of the all-India Moslem League at Karachi.[1] Although the demand for Pakistan appears to have become more clear cut than ever, I feel that Jinnah is sincere in his profession of willingness to come to terms provided Congress abates its intransigence. I am not at all sure that negotiations with Jinnah instead of with Gandhi would not be the most profitable avenue of approach to "solve the deadlock", when the time comes. Such a move would probably bring the Congress High Command to their senses more quickly than anything else and, in view of the League's good record as opposed to the black record of the Congress, would be quite understandable.

[1] From 24–27 December.

292

Secretary of State to Government of India, Food Department

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 66–72

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *1 January 1944, 8 pm*

73. Your telegram 11305[1] of 21st December. Foodgrain imports. Present position is that H.M.G. decided in October[2] that shipment of one million tons per annum to India is out of the question and they have consistently declined to commit themselves to any long term programme. They have however agreed to provide shipping for 50,000 tons for January and similar amount for February loading, and intend to consider Indian requirements afresh when news of the winter rice crop is available. I am contemplating a fresh approach about mid-January.

2. My task will not be easy. It is true that we have more shipping, but the demands upon it particularly for military operations in Europe and for relief purposes are proportionately even greater and shipping can only be found for India at the expense of other essential programmes. For the case which I must

[1] No. 275. [2] No. 139; the date should be 24 September.

make on your behalf I am dependent on the material with which you provide me. Please therefore give me by 10th January the best brief you can compass for whatever you conceive to be the real import needs of the country. You will, I am confident, put those needs at the lowest figure possible so that the transport of foodgrains shall interfere as little as possible with the consummation of the United Nations' effort towards the ending of the war.

3. To bring out measure of effort made by India out of her own resources, you should give special attention to the following points (*a*) The supply position resulting from the autumn and winter rice crops both in relation to previous years and to the needs of the people so far as these can be calculated. (*b*) The measures which you and the Provinces have taken and propose to take to produce the maximum crops of foodgrains. H.M.G. will obviously desire to know the success or otherwise attending the Grow More Food campaigns. (*c*) Some general account is desirable of the procurement arrangements in the various Provinces, the extent to which the method adopted is dictated by the limited means at the disposal of Government and the prospects of early adoption where necessary of more satisfactory methods. (*d*) The extent to which supplies are expected to be forthcoming from surplus provinces for deficit areas and the means of achieving this. (*e*) The steps you have taken or propose to take to establish reserves, central or otherwise, and to protect these from the inevitable drain of day-to-day demand. You will no doubt indicate the extent to which such reserves can be built up out of indigenous supplies, and the extent to which you consider imports necessary for the purpose. In this connection it will help me if you can indicate the time of year when reserve supplies are particularly required in the various parts of the country. (*f*) At least a preliminary analysis of the anticipated effects on consumption of rationing schemes adopted and contemplated.

4. There will no doubt be other points which occur to you. I would, however, lay stress upon the fact that, in the very difficult shipping circumstances of the present time, the case for imported foodgrains in general, and for whatever may be your final considered estimate of minimum requirements, requires to be closely and carefully argued and firmly supported by concrete evidence. The figure of 1½ million tons of foodgrains named by the Gregory Committee is not adequately argued in the Report for my present purposes.

5. I hope that the material you supply will enable me to deal, *inter alia*, with following argument with which I am bound to be confronted, namely that India on a long term view ought to be self supporting, even if some short term imports are necessary while other means of dealing with situation are introduced, and that the loading of 310,000 tons of grain over five months October to February ought to have given Government of India enough time to introduce alternative remedies.

6. In your telegram under reference your statement of 1944 defence demands might I think be strengthened if it contained an indication of the extent to which the demand represents the needs of non-Indian troops additional to the British personnel of the pre-war army in India and is accordingly a new requirement rather than a transfer from previous civil needs. If as I assume "incompleted 1943 indents" means that reserves depleted last year must be brought up to regulation level in 1944 the point is worth clarifying. Operational arguments such as suggest themselves in this context have particular force with H.M.G.

7. Your plea for imports is in part based on argument that they are essential in order to reduce internal price level for foodgrains. This is of course the root of your problem. But imports are not the only means of reducing prices and H.M.G. will have to be satisfied that you are taking all the internal measures at your disposal to force down prices and summary of what you are doing would be helpful. Any measures which have been rejected as likely to be too difficult politically should be indicated and difficulties evaluated.

8. I regret the necessity of placing upon your officers at a time of stress a heavy demand for material of this kind but my experience in approaching H.M.G. for imports on previous occasions has left no doubt in my mind that there is no possibility of satisfactory results without a fully supported case capable of standing up not merely to examination in debate but also to careful analysis by the official experts of H.M.G.

9. Besides approach to H.M.G. indicated above I have on 7th January to receive a deputation from the Labour Party on the Indian food situation generally and shall probably have to make statement in Commons a few days later. For these purposes I shall need something on different lines from the above viz., matter calculated to repel general and specific charges that food situation has been mishandled. I possess much already, but please telegraph to reach me by 5th January anything you can to bring me up to date and enable graphic picture of present position to be drawn. In particular, what is most suitable formula to indicate improvement in Bengal fairly but without undue optimism? Please include informative description (such as I have not been able to derive from telegraphed military relief situation reports)[3] of military aid including situation found in Districts, method and agencies of distribution, functions of civil power, extent of free distribution, general picture of relief (*a*) in larger centres, (*b*) in village[s] indicating chain of processes by which grain gets from main stock into hands of consumer and how this has been facilitated by intervention of military. Such narrative may help me to meet attacks weighted with detailed accounts hostile to Government. It should deal with health

[3] See No. 200, note 1.

aspect as well as with food. Is there any reply, other than simple denial, to constantly repeated allegation that there are two million dead?

10. Viceroy should see with reference to his 2807–S[4] of 22nd December.

[4] No. 276.

293

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 63

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *1 January 1944, 2.30 pm*
PRIVATE

7. I am particularly anxious that your Food Department shall understand that my telegram No. 73[1] of to-day's date asking for brief is intended to be constructive and friendly and not repeat not to damage your case. In this matter I am your advocate with other Departments of H.M.G. who also have vital responsibilities at stake, and I want Food Department to realise, as you yourself are aware, how stiff is the position and how flawless our case must be if it is to succeed.

[1] No. 292.

294

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir T. Rutherford

L/P&J/8/652: f 134

SECRET THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *3 January 1944*

My dear Rutherford,

My advisers here are still very worried about the food situation in Bengal. They say that your Ministry have so far failed to take, and seem unlikely to take in time, the administrative measures necessary to regain and maintain control. In particular they are not satisfied with the manner in which the procurement plan is being executed, the enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order, and the progress with the rationing scheme for Calcutta. As you know, I have from the first thought that drastic intervention by the Centre might be necessary, but was reluctant to act until the Ministry had had a fair run. I must now consider intervention, and take a decision one way or the other within the next few days.

2. I need not go into the various constitutional possibilities. Abell (who is delivering this letter) knows them, and can discuss them with you if you wish.

Whatever form intervention might take, it would have to be such as to remove food administration effectively from ministerial control, and place it directly under the Governor. The implications of this from the constitutional and political point of view are so serious that I must be quite clear on two points before taking my decision.

3. The first is whether intervention is absolutely necessary. We clearly cannot let Bengal drift back into a famine, and if the Ministry are not doing all they can to prevent a recurrence of last year's disaster we must intervene. On the other hand, we must be quite clear ourselves about what the Ministry ought to be doing, and the extent to which they are or are not in fact doing it before we can say that intervention is unavoidable. I take it that the main needs are:—

(i) a clear procurement policy;
(ii) an adequate organisation to make the actual purchases;
(iii) an adequate Civil Supplies Staff, both at headquarters and in the districts to supervise purchase operations and movements, and to control stocks and prices by the effective enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order; and
(iv) an adequate organisation for the rationing of Calcutta, covering both the storage and distribution of foodgrains.

Are you satisfied that the Ministry are providing for these needs? If not are their shortcomings so serious as to involve the real risk of another breakdown? You must take into consideration the fact that wheat prospects in the Punjab are now poor, and that outside aid in 1944 may be more difficult than in 1943.

4. Secondly, if you advise in favour of intervention in reply to my first question, is the Governor, as things now are, in a position to make a better showing than the Ministry? If we oust the Ministry from control over food by moving into section 93 or otherwise we must make a success of it. If you feel that you could not, as things now are, be quite certain of making a success of it, what help would be needed to ensure success, in the form of additional officer staff, and approximately what numbers would be needed and by when?

5. I have decided to send Abell down to you with this letter, as cipher telegrams are not always satisfactory when replies are needed to difficult questions. Abell knows my views generally, and is authorised to discuss this letter with you if you wish.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

295

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 62

PRIVATE *4 January 1944*

26–S. Food imports. Your private telegram No. 7,[1] January 1st.

1. I feel that on this matter it is of no use going on arguing from month to month on figures and details. Cabinet must take decision on broad picture which is as follows.

2. I am fighting vital battle against risk of famine and inflation threat and the two are closely interlocked. Unless Central Government can control food prices it cannot control inflation. Main weapon must be existence of substantial reserve of food grains in hands of Central Government and only means of securing this is by import minimum of one million tons during 1944. We must be assured of this now (repeat now) and be able to announce it. We cannot carry through our policy with uncertain doles from month to month. Actually Food Department minimum has always been 1,500,000 tons, i.e. one million tons to make up normal deficit, five hundred thousand tons reserve. But I should hope to do with one million.

3. It is no use applying European standards to Indian conditions or expecting European standards of efficiency in Indian administration. India is lamentably under-administered and there is no possibility of bringing it anywhere near European standard though we are doing our best to effect improvements. Nor is there any public spirit or general co-operation such as in U.K., or means of enforcing it.

4. Whatever the crop prospects or results, India will always be in some deficit and our main reserve must come from outside and must be large—not less than 500,000 (half of one million) tons.

5. Punjab crop is likely to be very much less than last year which increases need for imports.

6. I think Cabinet must trust man on the spot. You can warn them from me that it is my considered judgment that unless we can be assured now of receiving one million (repeat one million) tons of food grains during 1944 we are heading for disaster both as regards famine and inflation. Should matter turn out better than I expect it would be possible to cancel strength of shipments,[2] but I cannot carry out essential policy of control by Centre unless I have assurance that imports on this scale will be available if required.

7. If absolutely necessary I will send home high official to give further explanations to Cabinet but it is not easy to spare one at this time.

[1] No. 293.
[2] Wavell Papers, Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6 have 'cancel later shipments'.

296

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: f 122

4 January 1944

27–S. Turnbull's telegram No. 4[1] of January 1st to Jenkins. Do you adhere to opinion that India's representatives should arrive some time before conference of Dominion Prime Ministers? If so, do you think they would (sic? should) arrive by say April 10th?

2. For how long would War Cabinet like them to remain? You suggested a month or two but Linlithgow in his telegram of September 26th[2] suggested they should remain till end of European War. I think I should give no undertaking that they will return before end of European war.

3. Political Department are a little doubtful about appointing Jam Sahib again. He has been tiresome over attachment scheme and is not at the moment altogether in their good books. Kashmir has been considered but cannot get away owing to change of Prime Minister. Bhopal is a possibility if not elected Chancellor of Chamber of Princes in middle February. If he becomes Chancellor he will not be able to get away. Personally I see no objection to choice of two Moslems as the last two representatives were both Hindu. Have you any comments and do you mind my postponing choice of a Prince till after election of Chancellor?

[1] See No. 243, note 2. [2] L/PO/6/111.

297

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 59

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *5 January 1944, 11.45 pm*
Received: 6 January, 4 am

118. In continuation my telegram 103.[1] Following additional information received from Bengal.

2. There is improvement in food situation except in parts of Dacca, Noakhali, Chittagong, Tippera, Nadia, Pabna and Midnapore, where it is less marked.

3. Up to end of December Rs. 32 million spent on gratuitous relief in Bengal, over Rs. 13 million on test relief works and over Rs. 20 million on agricultural loans. 4,700 rural and urban relief committees functioning and all relief officers still at work.

4. Over 70,000 lbs quinine sent to local officers and dispensaries since July and 2½ million cubic centimeters of anti-cholera vaccine. About 1,700 additional public health staff now engaged in preventive measures, to be increased by 700 this month. Over one million persons have been inoculated against cholera during November and December. 347 civil emergency hospitals opened with 11,400 beds. 230 more hospitals with 4,600 beds are being opened. In addition 18 military hospitals opened with 2,000 beds. 104 extra civil doctors engaged with necessary equipment.

5. Following is an example of tendency to exaggerate mortality. Prominent politician recently stated that in Noakhali District 25,000 people had already died in November and December and 200,000 were on verge of death. Commissioner of division, however, reports that during last six months total ascertainable deaths from cholera smallpox and starvation do not exceed 10,000.

[1] No. 299.

298

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *5–6 January 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have to thank you for three letters dated respectively the 9th,[1] 16th[2] and 23rd December.[3] These arrived in a bunch on the 2nd and 3rd January. I am

doing what I can at this end to expedite the transmission of bags, and hope you will do the same. The present irregular deliveries are a great nuisance.

2. I have little to add to our discussion about the Finance Membership. Raisman, as I told you in a private telegram[4] the other day, is pressing for a very early decision because he is sending his elder boy to school in England this spring, and if he is to go himself it would naturally suit him best for the whole family to move together. I do not think you need worry further about his future. My impression is that he would stay on as Finance Member if asked to do so, but would not be sorry to go. I doubt if he expects the offer of a Governorship, and he is not fitted by temperament or experience to be a Governor.

3. I have, as you know, considered the possibility of appointing an Indian Home Member. In theory Anderson is probably right. In practice the problem is to find a suitable man. You will, I think, agree that, with the exception of Mudaliar, none of my Indian colleagues is outstanding. The Home Membership is extremely important both from the law and order point of view and in relation to the service problems with which we are now faced. I doubt if Mudaliar would make a good Home Member; his outlook and experience fit him far more for the Finance portfolio. I have considered Roy (Secretary, War Transport Department) and Trivedi (Secretary, War Department) as possibles if an Indian is appointed. Now that Twynam has failed me,[5] I am thinking of Mudie, but I have not yet made up my mind. Maxwell has consented to stay until his time is up and not ask to be relieved before the Assembly session. If Rutherford's leave, about which I am telegraphing to you today, is sanctioned, Mudie may not be available in April and we may have to make temporary arrangements until he is available.

4. I agree with you that the Indianisation of the Executive Council is connected with wider constitutional issue, but am not prepared at the moment to give you a considered view on the desirability or result of complete Indianisation. I have been too busy with administrative problems to set out my ideas on this, I will try to do so in my next letter.

5. You will by now, I hope, have received an interesting letter dated the 21st December[6] from Professor Hill. He gave me a copy of this letter, and I telegraphed[7] saying that I would let you know my views on it as soon as possible. Hill, I think, underestimates the financial difficulties of progress in this country. One of his main ideas is to establish a medical school of really high

[1] No. 260. [2] No. 268. [3] No. 280. [4] 2882–S of 30 December. L/PO/8/52 b: f 105.

[5] See No. 290, note 3.

[6] L/E/8/2612. Professor A. V. Hill visited India from November 1943 to April 1944 to advise on the organisation of Indian scientific research.

[7] *Ibid.*

quality to produce teachers and research workers who will in turn enliven the entire medical and health services of India. Before the war the Graduates of the existing medical schools were, I believe, finding difficulty in earning a living, and this difficulty will persist as long as the mass of the population believes in the indigenous medical systems and is not prepared to pay for medical aid. I am all in favour of improving the quality of our medical services but I do not see how any Government could finance a first-class free service for our vast population, and that is what Hill's scheme seems to imply—in the rural areas at least. Another interesting idea put forward by Hill is that we need a whole-time Department of Reconstruction or Development. This has been suggested before, and there is a good deal of support for the idea among the general public. We are so short of experts that it would be difficult to constitute a completely equipped department which could act independently of the existing departments, and I feel that the existing departments will in any case have to retain responsibility for the detailed work on their own subjects. But there is much to be said for the appointment of a whole-time Member to serve as Vice-Chairman (in fact the working Chairman) of the Reconstruction Committee of Council and to supervise and co-ordinate all planning. I am looking into this and will let you know my views as soon as I can.

6. You may have thought the Finance Department's official telegram No. 14,[8] dated 2nd January 1944, about the proceedings of the Cabinet Committee on Indian financial problems too indignant. I approved this telegram in draft after discussion with Raisman, and let you know in a parallel private telegram[9] how strong the feeling here is, even among officials, that India is not being fairly treated. The suggestion that the officials here have used their position as agents of His Majesty's Government with an eye to India's interests only has caused intense resentment. To the best of my belief there is no foundation whatever for this suggestion, and I hope you will be able to scotch it. The repeated demands for information by the Cabinet Committee, and your own recent questionnaire[10] about food, on which I have sent you a private telegram[11] cause me considerable concern. If India is expected to carry a substantial war burden indefinitely, we do need substantial sympathy and help. It is useless to assume that the administrative services in India are as numerous and as highly organised as they are with you. You must in the long run take it that the responsible authorities here are not asking for more than they really need. I tried to bring these points out in my private telegram[12] on grain imports.

[Para. 7, on the inter-governmental Committee on Refugees, omitted.]

8. I have asked Raisman for his advice about the possibility of extending compulsory borrowing, and also for information about publicity for the Lottery Loan.

9. You mention Srivastava's omission to include in his Assembly speech on food an account of our arrangements for increasing production. I have not thought it worth while to refer to the official report of the speech, for, as you probably know, the "Grow More Food" campaign comes under Jogendra Singh and not under Srivastava. It is quite likely therefore that Srivastava did not mention the matter though he might very well have done so. Jogendra Singh talks freely about the campaign, and I think it has had adequate publicity both in the Assembly and outside.

10. I have had no reply yet from Smuts to the letter[13] I sent him through Shafa'at Ahmad Khan. There are various indications that South Africa is in a rather more conciliatory mood, but unless I hear something from Smuts fairly soon, my colleagues may not agree to further delay in their proposals for retaliation.

11. We are, I think, in general agreement about the problem of reinforcing the Services and the separate, though connected, problem of post-war recruitment to them. Maxwell is going ahead with his enquiries about immediate needs, and is preparing the draft of a communication to you about recruitment.

12. I am glad you liked my Calcutta speech.[14] I am finding it very difficult to deal with the political question on which people here affect to expect me to make some striking pronouncement at any moment. The next big occasion to which the politicians are looking forward is my address to the Legislature on the 17th February.

13. Bengal has, as always, been much on my mind, and I am very glad that Casey is likely to arrive by the 16th January. Srivastava is still most apprehensive about the efficiency of the Bengal Ministry, and would in his heart, I think, like to get rid of them altogether. But he does not want to be responsible for recommending their dismissal, and a few days ago his Department put up to me some rather half-hearted proposals for the issue of a direction to the Bengal Government requiring them to establish an official Food Board with specified powers, and for a simultaneous reference to you recommending the insertion in the Constitution Act of a section empowering Governors to bring the supply and distribution of essential commodities into the discretionary field when necessary. On receiving this advice I sent Abell to Calcutta by air with a letter[15] to Rutherford in which I put certain definite questions. A copy of this letter and of Rutherford's reply,[16] which was brought to me by Abell on the 5th

[8] Expressing resentment at the Cabinet Committee's request for detailed information about purchases and contracts made by Govt. of India on behalf of H.M.G. L/F/7/687.

[9] Of 1 January. L/PO/10/18. [10] No. 292. [11 and 12] No. 295.

[13] Enclosure to No. 238. [14] See No. 278, note 13. [15] No. 294.

[16] See No. 302, note 1.

January, is enclosed. My own conclusions will have reached you by telegram[17] long before you receive this letter, and I need not set them down here.

14. There has been no business of importance before the Executive Council, and the routine meeting on the 5th January took less than half an hour. My immediate plans are unchanged except that I hope to spend a day in the Punjab early in February to see some of the work done on consolidation of holdings and the prevention of erosion in the Jullundur and Hoshiarpur districts. I shall be in the United Provinces and Bombay from the 18th January until nearly the end of the month, and my February tour will be to Madras and the Central Provinces.

[Para. 15, on Lord Wavell's *Allenby in Egypt*, omitted.]

16. This letter is very hurried, I only received the draft a little while ago, and the mail leaves very shortly. I will try to write a more considered reply to some of your points later.

[17] Nos. 301 and 302.

299

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 57–8

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *6 January 1944, 3.45 am*
Received: 6 January, 6.30 am

103. Your telegram 73[1] of the First, paragraph 9. Following Appreciation read with material already supplied to you from time to time may serve purpose. All achievement has been by narrowest margin and thanks to providential harvests alone since imports on scale sufficient to back administrative efforts have been lacking.

2. In spite of all difficulties of past year caused by war superimposed on absolute shortage (see Viceroy's telegram 2069–S[2] of 18th September, 2173–S[3] of 10th October and Food Department telegram 9138[4] of 26th October) two and half million tons of foodgrains have been purchased and removed from surplus to deficit areas and Defence Services during 1943. Scarcity conditions have (? fortunately) practically disappeared from Deccan Districts of Bombay and Madras and we have been able to slow down serious deterioration of conditions in Travancore and Cochin though we are still far from satisfied with position there. We have maintained supplies for rationing of Bombay and by sending to Bengal nearly half million tons since middle of July alone have enabled relief centres to be supplied and over one month's reserve stock to be built up in Calcutta for rationing.

3. In Bengal as a result of these supplies and excellent winter rice crop now being harvested there is for the moment no general shortage of food but confidence of people and trade has suffered severe shock from which it will take time to recover. Generally speaking prices have fallen but are still about four times pre-war level and local shortages combined with speculative buying which Government has not yet been able to eliminate have caused local and it is hoped temporary rises. Impoverishment and under-nutrition have rendered people never of strong physique easy victims to endemic diseases malaria cholera dysentery.

4. Administrative efforts in Bengal must be viewed against following background (A) Districts are some of the largest in India and in East Bengal some areas most thickly populated in the world; population of one district is greater than whole of Province of Sind and that and neighbouring district as large as population of Australia (B) population of 60 million accustomed diet almost exclusively rice (C) no organized rice trade (D) only 450 rice mills (E) social customs which make distribution of relief to women difficult (F) communications hampered by jungle and vast river system (G) political prejudices which e.g. lately led Provincial Congress Party to resolve that they could not co-operate with relief measures of the Bengal Government (H) Constant propaganda against sale of grain to Government.

5. Organised distribution and relief in distressed areas was undertaken as soon as scarcity began to be felt. Government of India had to deprive other areas by diverting 'rescue' supplies to Bengal from last April. By beginning of December 6625 relief kitchens were functioning, of which 4469 were run by Government 1605 subsidised by Government and 551 private. These centres fed two and a half million people daily. One month ago, 230,000 people were receiving foodgrain doles and 21,000 cash doles. Cheap cooked food from canteens was being sold to 100,000 persons daily, and 105,000 were employed on test relief works. Milk canteens were established in districts and increasing number of Women's Societies and workers were, at the instance of Government, used in local relief organisations. Improvement is indicated by fact that many relief centres had been closed by end December, cooked food canteens now serve about 50,000 people daily and 40,000 persons are employed on test relief works.

6. Immediate problem is one of distribution of clothing medical relief and rehabilitation. Very large quantities of blankets and cloth have been distributed free and quantities are being increased. Doctors and nurses have been recruited

[1] No. 292. [2] No. 121. [3] No. 175.

[4] L/E/8/3319. The text of the tel. is also reprinted in *India* (*Food Situation 1943*) *Speech by the Food Member of the Governor-General's Council and other Papers* (Cmd. 6479), pp. 28–9.

for work in districts. Ten emergency hospitals and nearly 2,000 beds each[5] were opened in Calcutta, and more than 200 in the districts.

7. Bengal Government have following measures for rehabilitation of destitute persons under consideration (A) restoration of land, by loans for redemption or by Legislation, to cultivators who have sold under distress (B) loans or grants for building houses, boats (C) financing, by loans or grants, restoration of means of livelihood, implements, cattle etc., to artisans, small cultivators and small businessmen (D) financial aid for rescue from indebtedness (E) cottage industries for employment of incapacitated persons.

8. Military aid supplements normal functions of local Government and helps with advice manpower and material. Organisation in Calcutta of transport branch of Civil Supply Directorate under General Wakely with staff of Senior Military Officers handles movements in conjunction with Railways and river transport reception (by rail and sea) of foodgrain arrivals unloading storage and distribution. In distribution to rural areas main task is reduction of bottle-necks. Several thousand troops engaged in work of distribution have been provided with every form of subsidiary transport—lorries jeeps bullockcarts boats and mules. Immediately a requisition for food is made by a District Magistrate food supplied by Local Government is conveyed by rail waterway or road to a receiving centre in the district. From here any available form of transport is pressed into service for moving grain into the villages. On arrival in a village the foodstuffs are handed over to the civil authorities who arrange for their distribution among the people. Porters are employed if roads are impassable. There are 30 main distributing centres to which food is conveyed by military and civil co-operation and handed over to District Magistrates. Food trains entering Bengal are diverted if necessary, to wherever supplies are required according to pre-determined needs. The Army provides escorts en route and guards over dumps for pilfering and dacoity have been frequent. All concerned civil and military working 17 to 18 hours a day, have been supplying about 2,000 tons of foodgrains daily to the District Magistrates on whose directions it is passed on to the remotest villages. Military units have also been educating Bengalis by demonstration in preparation of food such as wheat and millets to which they are unaccustomed. All military units provide their own food.

9. The Army also assist distribution of clothing and medical relief. Casualty clearing units and field ambulances have linked up with expanded Civil Medical organisation. 100 military doctors have been provided, reconnaissance parties visit villages with food and medical relief accompanied where possible by doctors and medical orderlies to give quinine (? emetine) and inoculatory injections. Mobile treatment centres are working in launches along rivers. Opening of military hospitals is announced by drum and poster and Food

Member has himself seen units at work in Dacca District and eagerness with which villagers welcome medical relief and cloth distribution.

10. As example of civil organisation in larger centres Dacca Relief Committee has been operating for several months 13 free kitchens feeding 15,000 people daily 18 milk canteens for children nursing mothers and sick persons and about 65 cheap canteens giving meals at one anna per head. Most of work was voluntary and subsidised by Bengal Government.

11. Mortality statistics from Bengal are not available but allegation of 2 million dead is obvious exaggeration. There has been tendency to report all deaths since famine started as due to starvation, normal mortality figure for Bengal is 1,300,000 annually. Food Member visited a Sub-Division of Dacca District which is one of worst affected in all Bengal having population of about twelve lakhs. Mortality there may have been as high as (? 5 per cent) but it is quite wrong to base general calculation of mortality in Bengal on such isolated instances. Food Member has also visited parts of 24 Parganas which was also badly affected but here mortality was on nothing like same scale. Majority of Bengal Districts were far less affected than these two. It is considered on overall picture unlikely that exceptional mortality due to famine and disease has yet exceeded one million.

12. Detailed (? comment) called for from Bengal[6] not yet received and will be repeated to you tomorrow if useful.

13. So far as above Appreciation relates to health, please read subject to separate telegram[7] being sent by Education Health and Land Department and not yet seen in Food Department. *Message Ends.*

5 In tel. 201 of 8 January, the G. of I., Food Dept. stated '2,000 beds each' should read '1,400 beds total'. L/E/8/3322: f 43.

6 See Nos. 297 and 300.

7 This may refer to the regular fortnightly public health situation report for the period ended 2 January 1944 and sent as tel. 85 of 4 January. L/E/8/4961.

300

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 56

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *6 January 1944, 7 pm*
Received: 6 January, 7 pm

141. Continuation Food Department telegram No. 118[1] dated January 5. Following further report received from Bengal Government. *Begins.* There

1 No. 297.

are no accurate data from which to compile the number of deaths that may be ascribed to famine but after comparing for the period August to December 1943 the actual deaths in Calcutta with the normal and after taking into consideration the facts that there was an influx of moribund and destitute persons into Calcutta during those months which helped to swell the mortality figures while on the other hand incidence of cholera was higher in the districts outside it is estimated that the actual deaths in the autumn months was something over three times the normal. In 1941 and 1942 the normal deaths in the five months were about $5\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs. It is probable that the total deaths over the five months in 1943 did amount to about two millions but this figure included the normal deaths and also the deaths due to malaria epidemic all of which cannot be ascribed to famine conditions. *Ends.*

301

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *6 January 1944, 2.40 pm*
Received: 6 January, 3.20 pm

No. 38–S. Your telegram No. 29452[1] of 24th December. Bengal situation.

2. We must not let constitutional technicalities obscure realities of situation. Bengal famine of 1943 and its aftermath of misery and disease are grave national disaster with death roll which will never be known but may amount to one million or more. If we believe that this disaster which was largely due to ministerial incompetence may be repeated perhaps on an even larger scale in 1944 and that the remedy is direct administration by the Governor then we must find means to apply the remedy whatever the constitutional position may be. I admit the force of what you say about Provincial Autonomy, but there must be some limit to the price we pay for preserving it.

3. Food Department have reported that Ministry have failed to take and seem unlikely to take in time the administrative measures necessary to regain and maintain control. These are energetic execution of procurement plan, control of stocks and prices through effective enforcement of Foodgrains Control Order, and early introduction of rationing in Calcutta. Failure is due to inadequacy of administrative machinery reinforcement of which is far too slow. Lack of confidence both of officials and of public in Ministry is evident and tendency for price of rice to rise is most alarming at this time of year. Wheat prospects in Punjab are bad, and although current rice crop in Bengal should be more than sufficient for Bengal needs during 1944, Food Department

fear that artificial shortages will be created which administration will be too weak to remedy and that last year's disaster will be repeated with less hope of outside aid.

4. Food Department a few days ago recommended direction by Centre requiring Bengal Government to establish official Food Board with specified powers and concurrent reference to you for amendment of Constitution Act by insertion of section analogous to Section 57 to empower Governors to bring supply and distribution of essential commodities into discretionary field. Food Board would be under Ministerial control but Food Department hoped that in practice Governor would supervise.

5. On receiving this advice I sent letter[2] to Governor by hand of D.P.S.V. on 4th January asking whether in his opinion Bengal Government had (*i*) clear procurement policy; (*ii*) adequate organisation to make purchases; (*iii*) adequate Civil Supplies staff both at headquarters and in districts for purchase, operations and movements and to control stocks and prices under Foodgrains Control Order; (*iv*) adequate organisation for rationing of Calcutta including storage and distribution. If answer to any of these questions negative I asked if in Governor's view defects were so serious as to involve real risk of fresh breakdown. Also whether if Governor favoured intervention he was confident of success and what extra officer staff he needed to ensure success. I did not specify kind of intervention contemplated but left this for discussion between Governor and D.P.S.V. who knew my views.

6. Governor has replied today and his views with my comments are summarized in my immediately succeeding telegram. I am satisfied that we ought to intervene and that decision to do so must not be influenced by change of Governors. Casey could not express independent view for some weeks after his arrival and by then breakdown may be unavoidable. Next two to three months are critical for *Aman* procurement.

7. Five methods of removing food from Ministerial control have been suggested as theoretically possible:—

First.—Decision by Governor that he has a special responsibility in food matters under Section 52-(1) (*a*) of Constitution Act. Governor's decision would be final under Section 50-(3) and on taking it he could exercise much closer control overriding Ministry as he thought fit. Rutherford does not hold that he has or can have special responsibility for food unless actual danger of breach of the peace is involved and although my experts advise that he could be ordered under Section 54-(1) to hold otherwise I do not consider this method satisfactory. It does not place food in the discretionary field and as long as Ministers are in charge delays will occur which may be cumulatively disastrous.

[1] No. 283. [2] No. 294.

Second.—Use by Central Government of powers under Section 126-A. This is not satisfactory when object in view is steady application of policy over a long period as opposed to a single clearly defined act, since issue of direction at once obscures administrative responsibility. Ministry can say that direction has sabotaged Provincial policy which would otherwise have been successful while Centre can say that direction has not been properly applied. There can be no certainty that Ministry would resign. Even with reasonable goodwill on the Ministry's part results must be slow and goodwill is most unlikely.

Third.—Amendment of Constitution Act by insertion for period of war only of section analogous to Section 57 giving Governor power to take over and administer in his discretion the procurement and distribution of any essential commodity if it appears to him necessary to do so. This remedy has been discussed before.[3] It would be only partially effective for the reasons given under *fourth* below. Parliamentary legislation would be slow and the debates might be most embarrassing.

Fourth.—Partial application in Bengal of Section 93 the proclamation being so worded as to cover assumption by Governor of powers only in respect of Civil Supplies and the finance connected therewith. This is the course recommended by the Governor. I do not agree with it because administration of Civil Supplies and Finance connected therewith cannot be isolated from general administration of Province. Finances of Bengal are in deplorable condition and power to raise taxes and float loans is inseparable from power to handle food situation. Similarly public health is important part of relief work and Food Administration must be in a position to use all transport facilities and have at their disposal the services of Government personnel in all Departments to the extent required for efficient working.

Fifth.—Full application in Bengal of Section 93 by dismissal of Ministry for failure to take necessary food measures followed immediately by declaration without attempt to form alternative Ministry. This is really the only straight way of dealing with the situation. If it is held that present Ministry cannot deal with situation, it is certain that no alternative Ministry could succeed, and possible leading members of alternative Ministry such as Fazlul Huq and Mukerjee have shown lamentable lack of public spirit throughout crisis.

8. I realise grave political disadvantages of this course. But although Muslim League may kick especially in Eastern Districts of Bengal there will be many political elements in favour of direct official control and League opposition must be faced. I do not think Jinnah is in a position to bring about resignation of Punjab Ministry on this issue (the Sind Ministry might be glad of a pretext for resigning and is less important) and he would get little sympathy for any agitation in other Provinces.

9. Your view is that Section 93 can be employed only when administration

becomes constitutionally impossible and not as a remedy for inefficiency. But surely you cannot push this argument to the point of sacrificing another million lives on the ground that they are being sacrificed in a strictly constitutional manner. If we cannot use Section 93 what action do you suggest on the basis that palliatives will not do and that only direct official administration at earliest date can save situation?

10. As regards senior officials Williams is not a suitable Chief Secretary and Stevens seems too rigid for head of Food organization. Williams should be transferred and Stevens might replace him being replaced in turn by more dynamic administrator possibly a senior Army officer. Under Section 93 Advisers would be essential and in my opinion must be officials. Rutherford prefers mixed body of officials and non-officials including Premier but I consider this would prejudice success of change. Other non-officials not compromised by their conduct during crisis would be difficult to find. One problem in Bengal is low morale of Services due to Ministerial interference and non-official Advisers might be no improvement on Ministers in this respect.

11. Governor seems satisfied that even without additional staff he would [do] better than the Ministry. I will ask Commander-in-Chief if some additional Army Officers can be made available.

12. If you agree about Section 93 a communiqué explaining reasons will have to go out. In fact we shall have to prepare ground both here, in the U.K. and in Washington before the proclamation is issued. I would telegraph draft communiqué for your concurrence.

13. I would prefer not to issue direction under Section 54 but will do so if Rutherford insists. I am however definitely against letting the existence of direction be known.

14. Grateful for earliest possible reply on constitutional issue. Please discuss with Casey who will probably find it less embarrassing to take over with this matter already decided. Please remember that overriding consideration must be danger of repetition of disaster on larger scale with consequent effect on operations in South-East Asia Command and on public opinion throughout world.

[3] See Nos. 124, 125, 140, 146 para. 3 and 150.

302

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *6 January 1944, 2.40 pm*
Received: 6 January, 3.30 pm

No. 39–S. My immediately preceding telegram. Bengal situation. Following is summary of Rutherford's views:[1]

Begins. Ministry have[2] a clear procurement policy. Organisation for procurement ought to be adequate but there is doubt about firm selected as purchasing Agent for Eastern Bengal. Civil Supplies staff is adequate for procurement and movements but inadequate for enforcement of Foodgrains Control Order. Organisation for rationing Calcutta will be adequate.

If intervention is decided upon Governor can do better than Ministry as he is free from communal and other inhibitions and can deal direct with Services. Additional staff requirements cannot be stated accurately at such short notice but thirty junior officers might be required to work in districts. For the sake of public[3] confidence Civil Supplies administration and connected finance should be taken out of ministerial control and placed in discretionary field and it may be necessary later to take over Famine Relief and Local Self-Government and Public Health. Governor cannot certify that situation has arisen in which the Government of the Province as a whole cannot be carried on in accordance with provisions of the Act, but is prepared to certify that administration of Civil Supplies cannot so be carried on and to issue proclamation limited to Civil Supplies administration only. He therefore favours partial application of Section 93. This might lead to Ministry's resignation in which case he would accept full application of Section 93. If Secretary of State and Viceroy decide upon immediate full application of Section 93 he would require direction under Section 54. He would recommend mixed body of official and non-official advisers. *Ends*.

2. Following are my comments. Governor's conclusions do not follow from his premises. He is clearly satisfied that Food administration is unsatisfactory, but except for weak enforcement of Foodgrains Control Order points to no specific defects. He does not mention morale of Services, low state of which due to Ministerial interference and consequent lack of confidence is vital factor in situation. I am quite clear that Ministry are most dilatory and that their arrangements are not adequate either for procurement or for enforcement of Foodgrains Control Order. Governor himself favours partial intervention but I do not see how this could work. Power to raise taxes and loans, to make use of personnel in other Government Departments and to control transport[4] are

essential elements in food and relief administration. Also Public Health and Medical Services and considerable interference with local authorities are essential part of relief work. My final conclusions are stated in immediately preceding telegram.

[1] A copy of Sir T. Rutherford's letter summarised here and dated 4 January is on L/P&J/8/652.
[2] 'Ministry have' deciphered as '(? Bengal Chamber of Commerce) have'.
[3] 'public' omitted in decipher. [4] 'transport' omitted in decipher.

303

Mr Churchill to Mr Attlee (via Air Ministry)

Telegram, R/30/1/4: f 102

MOST IMMEDIATE

6 January 1944, 12.30 pm
Received: 6 January, 2.35 pm

FROZEN 1125. Prime Minister to Deputy Prime Minister. Reference W.P. (43) 590.[1]

I think it would be a grave mistake to appoint an Indian to this key post until we know where we are about what are euphemistically described as the "sterling balances". I, therefore, hope my colleagues will adopt the third alternative, namely, the extension of Sir J. Raisman's term for another year. I do not know why Mr Amery should assume that the decision will be more difficult next year. It may well be we shall have defeated Hitler which will of itself bring about great changes in the foundations of British and Indian finance.

[1] No. 289.

304

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 2nd Conclusions, Minute 2

L/PO/8/52b: ff 91–3

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 6 January 1944 at 5.30 pm were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Sir John Anderson, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton, Mr R. G. Casey

Also present during discussion of item 2 were: Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Leathers, Mr Richard Law, Lord Cherwell

INDIA

Appointment of New Finance Member

The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the S./S. for India (W.P. (43) 590)[1] as to what should be done when the normal term of office of Sir Jeremy Raisman, the present Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, came to an end in April 1944. Attached to the memorandum was a telegram[2] by Lord Wavell, who thought that Sir Jeremy Raisman's successor should be an Indian, and recommended the appointment of Sir R. Mudaliar. The S./S. for India strongly supported this proposal.

The following views were put forward by the S./S. for India and other Ministers in support of the course proposed.

(*a*) It was no longer necessary that the Finance Member should be an expert. What was required was rather a Finance Minister, capable of weighing the advice of his experts, and having come to his conclusion, of convincing his colleagues.

(*b*) This was in accord with the general tendency whereby the Viceroy's Council was ceasing to be a small Council of expert officials and was becoming something much more like a Cabinet, overwhelmingly Indian, of men chosen for their general political and administrative ability, but not responsible (as in this country) to the Legislature.

(*c*) Any Finance Member sent out from this country would find it more difficult than an Indian to get acceptance of the measures required to meet the present financial situation, or, later on, to negotiate the agreement on outstanding financial issues between the Government of India and the British Treasury.

(*d*) Difficulty had been encountered in finding a suitable British candidate. Any Finance Member who was connected with the Bank of England would be suspected of trying to defend British financial interests. On the other hand, it should be possible to find an expert from this country suitable to act as Adviser to Sir R. Mudaliar.

(*e*) It was dangerous to continue to withhold key posts from Indians. Moreover, the fact that a man of Sir R. Mudaliar's undoubted qualities was available afforded an opportunity of making an appointment which would give great satisfaction to that section of Indian public opinion which did not take its views from the political parties.

This view was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The following were the main points made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and by other Ministers who shared his view.

(*f*) The situation which the Finance Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council had to face was one of extreme difficulty. It was of the utmost

importance to appoint the best man who could be found. Nobody in India had the necessary qualifications.

(*g*) The proposal that the Finance Member should be appointed for his political ability and that he should rely on the help of an expert adviser did not meet the case. This point was specially emphasised by those with experience of Indian administration.

(*h*) H.M.G. had a direct responsibility for Indian finance which had repeatedly been acknowledged, and we could not afford to stand aside and see a dangerous situation develop.

(*i*) The recent debate[3] in the House of Commons on the food situation in India (a matter within the responsibility of the Indian Provincial Governments) had shown that Parliament would not lightly absolve H.M.G. of responsibility for the shortcomings of Indian administration.

(*j*) India was to be the base for very important operations. The extent to which India could carry this burden would largely depend on how the financial situation was handled.

(*k*) At the present time there was a Congress majority on the Board of the Reserve Bank of India. An Indian had recently been appointed to be Governor of the Bank. The appointment of an Indian as Finance Member at this juncture would result in an undue risk that finance questions would be settled as a result of strong political pressure.

(*l*) Indian public opinion would readily accept the appointment of someone from this country as Finance Member, provided that a man of acknowledged and outstanding qualifications was appointed. In this connection the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that he hoped to be able to put forward some further names.

(*m*) Once an Indian had been appointed as Finance Member, it would be virtually impossible again to appoint to this post someone from this country. But there was no certainty that a man of Sir R. Mudaliar's qualities would always be available.

(*n*) If a suitable man could not be found at the moment, it would be worth while to give further consideration to the extension of Sir Jeremy Raisman's term of office for a further year. In this connection the War Cabinet were informed that the Prime Minister had sent a telegram[4] saying that he thought it would be a grave mistake to appoint an Indian as Finance Minister until we knew how we stood about the sterling balances, and that he hoped his colleagues would consider the extension of Sir Jeremy Raisman's term for another year.

(*o*) Discussion followed as to whether certain phrases in Lord Wavell's telegram (the "transfer of financial responsibility in this country to Indian hands cannot be postponed indefinitely"), and in the Secretary

[1] No. 289. [2] No. 282. [3] See No. 209, note 1. [4] No. 303.

of State's memorandum ("demonstrate the sincerity of our desire to see India governed by Indians and in India's interests"), implied that the appointment of an Indian to be Finance Member was a constitutional change and was being urged on that account. There was general agreement among Ministers that no constitutional change was in question. The appointment of an Indian as Finance Member would, however, be a further important step in the process of Indianisation of the Viceroy's Council, which would inevitably have some effect on the growth of convention.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER, summing up the discussion, said that it was clear that the predominant view of the War Cabinet was not in favour of the appointment at this juncture of an Indian as Finance Member.

The War Cabinet accordingly invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary of State for India to consider whether they could suggest the names of persons[5] suitable for this appointment; or, alternatively, whether they would wish to recommend the extension of Sir Jeremy Raisman's term for a further year.

5 'in this country' has been deleted on the file copy and also in the Cabinet Office version of these Conclusions.

305

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/25

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *6 January 1944*
Received: 25 January

I have just received your long and most useful telegram[1] about the actual Bengal famine situation in good time for the Labour deputation which I am seeing tomorrow. I have also had your private telegram[2] about the necessity for a definite programme of imports. In it you lay stress on the fact that the Cabinet ought to decide, not so much on detailed figures, as on their reliance on the responsible man on the spot. The trouble, however, is that there are so many responsible men on other spots who make their claim on shipping, and I feel extremely doubtful whether, unless well supplied with definite facts and answers to the sort of questions that will be asked in Cabinet, there is any chance of getting your demand met even in part. Only the other day Leathers rang up expressing the hope that he could now, in view of the good prospects of the Bengal crop, divert the ships due to sail for India from Australia in January and February. I told him that this was out of the question, and that I should very probably be coming back for more. But that does indicate the kind of position I should be up against here.

2. You mention at the end of your telegram the possibility of sending someone here to state the case for the Government of India. I wonder whom you have in view. I hardly imagine that you could spare Srivastava or Hutchings at this moment. Possibly you might consider Azizul Haque, who did have the question at his fingers' ends not so long ago, especially if you were going to send him over in connection with the economic discussions. Even so, he would have to be well briefed with definite figures.

3. I see that the Joint Secretaries of the Bengal Government's Coalition Party have issued a manifesto[3] denouncing Srivastava and asking for his resignation. I am afraid this is typical of the way in which the communal question enters into everything. I am not sure that you will not have to end up by composing your Executive entirely of Indian Christians or by inventing a new official religion to which all Government Servants and Ministers should be bound to subscribe!

4. In that connection there is an aspect of the recruitment for the future Government Services which I should like you to turn over in your mind. I wonder very much whether, on the lines of recruitment by examination from adults who have already gone from the university, you will ever get men either free from communal bias or with the requisite qualities of character. To get the right sort of man I believe the only solution will be to catch them really young. The Turks in old days conscribed Christian infants of their janizaries and picked the most promising of them at an early age for special education as administrators. The French have done something similar in some of their Colonies, notably I think in Madagascar, where they select at a fairly early stage in secondary education those boys who both in ability and character show most promise, and then educate them for a series of years for administrative posts, laying special stress on developing in them a positive devotion to the French ideal, to French culture and to unity with France. Would it be impossible now, in preparation for India's self-government, to start a school or schools centring in a college or university, specifically devoted to the training of boys for the service of India? Such schools could fit in with on the one hand Dehra Dun and on the other a university of the Civil Government Services, both Provincial and All-India. I throw this out as a very general idea. After all, in old days the Indian Services, both military and civil, were largely recruited from boys who went to certain special schools like Haileybury, where from the very beginning they looked to India as a career, read about Indian history and were eager to go out and identify themselves with the country. If we were really setting out from the point of view of supplying a permanent element in the Civil Services I should like to see that restarted. Anyhow, it might be worth

[1] No. 299. [2] No. 295. [3] A Reuter summary of this statement is on L/E/8/3312.

while thinking of creating it as something indigenous to India. Meanwhile, I shall await with great interest Maxwell's reply to your letter of December 7th[4] dealing with the whole problem of recruitment and reorganisation, both short-term and long-term.

5. Jinnah seems to be going all out on an extreme line which looks all the more absurd in view of the difficulties of India's food and health situation. I wouldn't take his criticisms of the Supreme Court's proposals seriously.[5] In any case, even if Pakistan came about, the rest of India would presumably be a federation and the Supreme Court would be required to deal with the same sort of issues as those for which it was created over a somewhat narrower field.

6. In this connection an old idea of Simon's is being ventilated anew by Lord Greene and one or two others, namely, that the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council should become a peripatetic body making use of the large pool of judges in the different Dominions, sit with those judges in each Dominion and so save the time and money of appellant[s]. I rather doubt if it will come to anything, though it might have been a good thing if started twenty years ago. What might conceivably emerge out of it is some idea that the Dominion Judges should be asked to sit here together with the House of Lords and Judicial Committee amalgamated, while members of the Judicial Committee should be available to sit with the Supreme Appellate Courts of the different Dominions. As I say, I don't know that much will come of the discussion, but I thought I might just let you know that something of the sort might come on the tapis before long. I don't think it need interfere with our present plans for an optional appeal as between the Privy Council and the All-India Supreme Court.

7 January 1944

7. The War Cabinet, after a long discussion[6] in which I had some good support, but not a majority in view of the very strong line taken by Anderson helped by a telegram[7] from Winston objecting and urging retention of Raisman, turned down my proposal. On the other hand, they showed no enthusiasm for Niemeyer and were impressed by the obvious objection to anyone who would be regarded as a Treasury or Bank of England nominee. It has been left to Anderson and myself to consider during the next few days whether we can think of anyone of the necessary high qualifications and public standing not open to the same objection, and come back to the Cabinet for a decision as between such a person, if he can be found, and prolonging Raisman. Casey was at the meeting and can tell you all about it in greater detail if it interests you. They realise the need for an early decision, and I hope it may be possible for me to telegraph to you again about the time that this reaches you.

4 No. 253. 5 See No. 278, note 8 for *Dawn*'s attitude towards these proposals.
6 No. 304. 7 No. 303.

306

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 173

MOST IMMEDIATE *7 January 1944*
PRIVATE

50–S. My telegram 38–S[1] of January 6th. Bengal situation. Casey's statement to Press Conference[2] has had wide publicity here and reference to co-operation with Ministry has been welcomed in statement by Nazimuddin. If Casey feels that immediate action would embarrass him I am prepared to await his arrival. But you should realise that delay involves risk and that in my view intervention is inevitable. It might be less embarrassing for him if action is taken before his arrival.

2. Nazimuddin expected here tomorrow for two or three days. I will see him and leave him in no doubt about my dissatisfaction with dilatory methods of his Government.

[1] No. 301.
[2] Of 6 January. Mr Casey said that the Bengal ministry and administration could count on him for every support for all measures calculated to prevent any recurrence of the ordeal, first of famine, then of disease, through which Bengal was passing.

307

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 102

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *7 January 1944, 2.30 pm*
PRIVATE AND SECRET

33. Cabinet influenced by strong objections of Anderson and telegram[1] from Winston turned down[2] Indian Finance Member but not keen on Niemeyer. They have asked Anderson and myself to look round for possible alternative of high standing not open to objection of being Treasury or Bank of England henchman and report next week. Failing success in our search they will probably reconsider extension of Raisman.

[1] No. 303. [2] No. 304.

308

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: ff 175–7

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *7 January 1944, 11.55 pm*

657. I am circulating your telegrams 38–S[1] and 39–S[2] together with preceding correspondence to the Cabinet and hope for discussion on Tuesday morning. In the meantime, in view of grave political consequences of dismissing Bengal Ministry and proceeding to full application of Section 93, please let me know—

(*a*) whether you are convinced that the situation in regard to control of the new crop and building up of reserves against recurrence of famine situation is so certainly and also so rapidly going downhill that methods (*i*) and (*ii*) in your paragraph 7 if taken together must be discarded as inadequate even if only employed for a period while Casey takes stock of situation and comes to his own conclusions. I class them together as both assume retention of Ministers[3] but constant use of Governor's over-riding powers in discharge of special responsibility. I agree that to issue a direction to the Governor under Section 54 that he should decide under Section 50–(3) that his special responsibility under 52–(1) (*a*) is attracted is artificial and unsatisfactory if Rutherford in fact does not judge that there is any menace to peace and tranquillity. But C. might judge otherwise and grounds are at any rate not more far-fetched than those for methods four or five. But anyhow directions by Central Government under Section 126–A should be so frequent and execution of them cover so wide a field of detail and time involved that Governor would have continuous opportunity to keep Ministers up to scratch.

(*b*) whether, as between partial and full application of Section 93 (recognising that partial application would presumably involve supersession of Minister in charge of Civil Supplies and possibly, in consequence, resignation of his colleagues) there might not be some advantages in favour of partial application, while fully realising that constant prodding of Ministers in charge of Departments not taken over and intrusion into their departmental spheres, would be likely by rapid stages to produce full application. Might not political opinion in India and outside react more favourably to process which could be represented as attempt to maintain ministerial government as far as possible consistently with regard for the interests of the people.

2. I agree that third method is ruled out by time factor, but so far as embarrassment of Parliamentary action is concerned, Proclamation under Section 93 has to be laid before both Houses, and would undoubtedly involve full debate.

[1] No. 301. [2] No. 302. [3] 'assume retention of Ministers' was received corrupt.

309

Mr Amery to Lord Leathers

L/E/8/3322: f 51

INDIA OFFICE, *8 January 1944*

My dear Leathers,
I understand that you are expecting some reply to the suggestion which you made to me on the telephone the other day that further loading of wheat for India against the January and February programme should be stopped. I thought I made it quite clear that so far from being able to accede to your suggestion, I would shortly be bringing up to you personally, as soon as I receive certain further details, the Viceroy's very strong request[1] for further shipments after the January and February programmes are completed. When I have obtained some further information which I have asked for[2] from him, I shall have to put this request forward. Before I do so I should like, in accordance with the arrangement which I made with you the other day, to have a further talk with you regarding these further shipments.

Yours ever,
L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 276, see also No. 275. [2] No. 292.

310

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *8 January 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET
This letter is dictated by myself, the unusual combination of an empty tray and half an hour to spare before dinner having happened to occur. My previous letters, as you will have probably gathered, were prepared by my staff and edited by myself. I hope they give you the background you require, but mails at present are so irregular that replies to your letters often have to be drafted in a hurry; and the pressure of work has been so great that I have not been able to give them the time I should have liked.

2. The situation in Bengal has naturally been my chief trouble. I only recommended[1] Section 93 to you after much heart-searching, as I realise the political implications—a possible head-on collision with Jinnah and the Muslim

[1] No. 301.

League—and it is contrary to my principles of action, in educating a people up to self-government, that one should take the reins out of their hands when one sees difficulties ahead. But we are drifting into such a serious situation, with its possible effect both on the war and on world opinion, that I decided that the recommendation was inevitable. It has come at a very unlucky period, just at the change of Governors, and I fear that Casey will not have a good start whichever way it goes. If only I could have got him, or any other really determined man, in the saddle at the end of October last, I feel there might have been no necessity for the Section 93. Ministers were thoroughly frightened and prepared to do anything that they were told. Unfortunately, Rutherford was concerned about his health, which is not good, and had, I think, lost heart; he went away to Darjeeling to recuperate, and never really took hold again. When I went down to Bengal again in the middle of December, I was very concerned at the position I found. Practically no progress had been made in many essential matters; and there was every indication that the bountiful, almost record, *Aman* crop, was likely to get into wrong hands; and that we were likely to have the same phenomenon in 1944 of high prices, profiteering and starvation in the midst of plenty.

The most serious factor is the loss of morale by the Services in Bengal, and of confidence by the general public in the ability of the Ministry to put things right. It was these factors more than anything else that influenced my decision.

The real fact is that Bengal is utterly inefficient; it is soft in every respect, and has simply carried on up to date because nothing hard has happened to it. Now that it is brought up against the test of war and its attendant misfortunes it is quite unable to stand up to them.

3. My next principal headache, coal, is looking a little better, but has a very long way to go yet before it is in anything like a healthy state.

4. Raisman was a little pessimistic about the inflation bogey when I saw him last, but Rowlands is more optimistic. Rowlands is a great asset, he is always cheerful and efficient, and I am very glad to have him here. I see Mountbatten regularly, and his dynamic personality is always an inspiration; but the recent strategical decisions have naturally rather depressed him, and he is now undergoing much the same sort of experience as I had last winter. He is moving to Ceylon about the middle of April, I think. I was rather doubtful about the wisdom of the move, but I think on the whole it will be a good thing for that headquarters to get away from G.H.Q. and to get to a place where mere considerations of space will make further expansion almost impossible; at its present rate of expansion the S.-E. Asia Command would have pushed the Government of India out of Delhi before very long.

5. I am sorry that the Cabinet have turned down[2] the appointment of an Indian to the Finance portfolio; it would of course have been a risk, but I

feel that it would be much better that Indians should learn to handle their finances under our guidance. I am still in difficulties over a Home Member now that Twynam has refused,[3] I shall probably have to cable to you about this before you receive this letter.

6. I am afraid that I can see no great prospect of political progress at the moment. The speeches delivered at the meetings of the Muslim League and the Mahasabha certainly showed no spirit of compromise or co-operation. There is no sign that any of the Liberals have any constructive idea, or courage to come out with it if they have; and the cries of "release Gandhi" on one side, and "Pakistan" on the other seem to represent almost the total of Indian political activity at the moment. I shall have to make some sort of political announcement when I address the Legislature on February 17th, and am now in process of drafting my address. I should like to assemble some sort of body to consider the possible constitutional future, but can see no daylight at present.

7. A question about the keeping of records has arisen on which I should like your views. Rutherford wrote to me lately asking whether Pinnell, an official in Bengal, could have access to certain papers with the Governor's Secretariat, in order to enable him to prepare for Lady Mary Herbert in his spare time a statement about the food situation in Bengal from September 1942 to September 1943; the object was to collect material which could be used to defend Herbert's reputation if it came under criticism in an enquiry. The papers include Herbert's letters and telegrams to Linlithgow and Linlithgow's replies, and records of discussions in the Bengal Cabinet. The bulk of those must be regarded as official documents. Rutherford was against grant of permission and I have refused it.

This matter led me to consider the general question of the keeping of records. I find that at present the practice appears to be for the Viceroy and some of the Governors to take away with them either the originals or copies of their correspondence with one another; and the P.S.V. has also apparently at the end of recent Viceroyalties taken away copies of a good deal of the Viceroy's correspondence with Governors and the Secretary of State. There seem to me to be considerable dangers in this practice, in view of the extremely confidential nature of much of the correspondence since the recent developments in India; and I should like your opinion as to whether we should not lay down some sort of rules about it.

[2] No. 304. [3] See No. 289, note 3.

311

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *9 January 1944, 2.30 pm*
Received: 9 January, 12.15 pm

No. 64–S. Your telegram No. 657[1] of 8th January. Bengal situation.

2. *Your paragraph 1 (a).*—Urgency arises from fact that next three months will decide fate of Bengal in 1944. There is therefore no time for experiments. Action both under Section 52–(1) (*a*) and under Section 126–A has the general disadvantage that it leaves food in effective charge of Minister. Consequence is that Minister who is obstructive or inefficient can cause delays which may be cumulatively disastrous. Governor must ask for and consider advice of Minister before exercising his individual judgment and what constitutes unreasonable delay in tendering advice or acting on Governor's orders might be disputed. Apart from this general consideration successful use of Section 52–(1) (*a*) is largely a matter of the personalities concerned. A determined Governor might in October and November last when Ministers were thoroughly frightened have used Section 52–(1) (*a*) with decisive effect, but it would be much more difficult to do so now. It is increasingly clear that directions under Section 126–A are ineffective and even dangerous. They involve long-range intervention in the details of provincial affairs which except on simplest issues is almost impossible and result in a division of responsibility of which the Bengal Ministers are already taking advantage. I cannot advocate use of these sections separately or in combination as remedy for present difficulties.

3. *Your paragraph 1 (b).*—I see grave difficulty in partial application of Section 93 for reasons given in paragraph 7 of my telegram No. 38–S.[2] Moreover partial application would involve displacement of Suhrawardy who is Ministry's most influential member and Muslim League resentment might be almost as great as that resulting from complete application. I cannot say whether Ministry as a whole would resign or not or whether Suhrawardy would accept another portfolio if Ministry remained in office and Premier advised his retention. Results would be problematical. Ministers might co-operate with Governor who would certainly need assistance from several departments. On the other hand they might deliberately make things difficult for him in order to justify their own failure and make dramatic exit[3] at suitable opportunity. Lack of public spirit and use of famine for political purposes have been prominent feature in Bengal throughout. I think Premier Nazimuddin is honest but weak and under Suhrawardy's influence. As there is no time for experiments I do not favour partial application of Section 93.

4. *Your paragraph 2.*—Your comment is correct. But Debate on Section 93 proclamation would follow and not precede action here, and would therefore be less embarrassing to us than Debate on amendment to Constitution Act.

[1] No. 308; the date should be 7 January. [2] No. 301.
[3] 'dramatic exit' deciphered as 'bargain exit'.

312

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: f 54

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *10 January 1944, 1.15 pm*
PRIVATE

40. Bengal. Have you discussed with any or all of your colleagues in Council? If not what do you expect their reactions to be? Please reply Most Immediate.

313

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 18

L/P&J/8/652: ff 160–3

India

Proposed Suspension of the Bengal Ministry and Assumption of Powers by the Governor under Section 93 of the Government of India Act

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *10 January 1944*

I append copies of telegrams[1] exchanged with the Viceroy in the last three weeks regarding his view that the Bengal situation can only be safeguarded and the danger of a recurrence of famine avoided if the Ministry is got rid of and government by the Governor by proclamation under Section 93 established.

In my telegram of the 24th December[2] reference is made to a previous exchange of telegrams with Lord Linlithgow in September. He warned me, in a telegram of the 4th September,[3] which was circulated to my colleagues, that in view of the weakness and incompetence displayed by the same Bengal

[1] Nos. 277, 283, 301 and 302. [2] No. 283. [3] No. 97.

Ministry in handling the food problem and in dealing with the failures of the Calcutta Corporation, it would very probably be necessary to apply Section 93. I enquired[4] by what processes it was contemplated to bring about the resignation of the Ministry or, alternatively, on what grounds to dismiss a Ministry which commanded a majority and presumably the confidence of the Legislature; and suggested that as the food problem was an all-India problem the appropriate course would be that the Central Government should fully and constantly use it[s] powers under Section 126A to issue directions to the Provincial Governments; these, or the constant exercise by the Governor of his special power to secure compliance with the Governor-General's directions, might lead to resignation of the Ministry, while refusal to comply would furnish clear ground for dismissal. Lord Linlithgow concurred generally,[5] though indicating that in his view the more likely developments would be, either such resentment by the Ministers of such constant invasion of the Provincial field by the Central Government that they would resign, or that Sir Nazimuddin would lose his supporters and so fail to command a majority in the Legislature and have to resign. In the event, owing largely to the impending demission of office by Lord Linlithgow and the interval required for a new Governor-General to take stock of the position, the situation did not so develop.

Now, three months later, Lord Wavell has again raised the problem, which, in essence, is whether to throw overboard regard for Provincial autonomy and get rid—by dismissal—of a Ministry which has a working majority, in order that the Governor may be free to take effective measures for the avoidance of a repetition of a partly man-made famine which cost possibly 1 million lives above the normal annual death-roll, or so to act within the principles of the constitution that the Ministry will either take, under pressure, measures that may prove adequate, or be driven by that pressure into resignation.

Lord Wavell's view is clear that, by whatever means, the responsibility for control of the food situation in Bengal must be taken out of the hands of the Minister. He discusses in his telegram 38–S[6] five methods:—

The first is that the Governor should decide that his special responsibility for the prevention of any grave menace to the peace and tranquillity of the Province is, in fact, affected by Ministerial incompetence, and that, therefore, rejecting their advice, he should issue to Ministers such orders as in the exercise of his individual judgment he thinks essential. The present Acting Governor does not hold that his special responsibility is or can be so attracted. Since the decision whether or not it is, is taken by the Governor in his discretion and in the exercise of his discretion the Governor is amenable to directions from the Governor-General, it would be within the latter's competence to direct the Governor to decide that his special responsibility is attracted. Lord Wavell rejects this course as unsatisfactory, but there is no reason why Lord Wavell and Mr. Casey should not later take a different decision from the Acting Governor,

and, though it may be a stretch of the intention of the Act, it is certainly not more so than resorting to Section 93 merely on the grounds of inefficiency.

The second, which is similar to the first in that it presumes the retention of Ministers and their primary responsibility for food, but contemplates the exercise of the Governor's individual judgment in constantly, if necessary, overruling his Ministers and requiring them to do other things than they advise, is that which I suggested to Lord Linlithgow as constitutionally not improper and as designed either to secure that what seemed necessary to the Central Government was done with adequate efficiency or to lead to the resignation of an incompetent Ministry. Lord Wavell rejects it because of the uncertainty whether at any particular stage in the fulfilment of a long-term direction the responsibility rests still with the Provincial Ministry or with the Central Government; because, even if the Bengal Government set themselves to comply with the directions of the Centre, they would do so too slowly and too grudgingly for compliance to be effective, and because it is not certain that it would bring about the Ministers' resignation—and entry into a Section 93 situation—which is what he really aims at.

The third may be dismissed as unsuitable owing to the time factor. In the press of Parliamentary business we cannot be sure of getting passed in time so controversial an amendment as one that would take out of Ministers' hands a function so peculiarly theirs as the food supplies of the people. (Lord Wavell is, of course, wrong in believing that by discarding this method Parliamentary discussion would be avoided.)

The fourth course is a Proclamation under Section 93, but limited so that the Governor would assume to himself only those powers which are necessary to enable him to control the food situation. The Viceroy holds, and my advisers share his view, that it would be found within a very short space of time that this limitation was impracticable and that assumption of all Ministerial powers was inevitable. For this very reason—which from one point of view commends this course, since it would indicate a determination to preserve to the utmost limit the responsibility of Ministers to aid and advise the Governor—the Viceroy rejects it as inadequate.

From this his recommendation of the fifth course follows logically—that is of a Proclamation under Section 93 assuming to the Governor at one stroke—as in all the other Section 93 Provinces—the whole gamut of Ministerial powers, the suspension of the Legislature, and direct rule with the aid of Advisers. (Whether these should be all official or some non-official is a further problem.)

But this entails the dismissal of a Ministry, predominantly Moslem League in outlook, which commands a working majority in the Legislature, for reasons which it could not be disguised were in fact a conviction of its insufficient efficiency.

[4] No. 104. [5] No. 109. [6] No. 301.

This is a flat rejection of the principle of Provincial autonomy—and the question before my colleagues is whether for the more certain avoidance, it is to be hoped, of a repetition of the disaster of the last few months, this reversal of policy is to be made. What Lord Wavell refers to as constitutional technicalities are the statutory provisions by which the policy and intention of Parliament were given expression.

Having regard to the terms of Section 93 (the text of which will be found in Appendix II), the material point is whether it can properly be said that the present situation is such that the government of the Province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Act. The position under the Act is broadly that the Governor is not entitled to reject the aid and advice of his Council of Ministers in the matters, *inter alia*, of Civil Supplies and Public Health, save—

(i) where the Central Government has given certain directions in these matters, with which the Ministers decline to comply, or in the carrying out of which they prove obstructive; and
(ii) where their advice would, if accepted, affect the due discharge of one or other of the Governor's special responsibilities.

The point at issue, therefore, is whether, short of the application of Section 93, the provisions of the Act are inadequate to meet the situation in that, in cases not covered by either of the above two contingencies, the Governor must accept from Ministers whom he sees no reasonable chance of replacing by others more effective for these purposes, advice which will, in his opinion and in that of the Governor-General, prove disastrous.

L. S. A.

Appendix I to No. 313

[*There follow the texts of Nos. 277, 283, 301 and 302.*]

Appendix II to No. 313

[*There follow the texts of Section 93 of the Government of India Act, 1935 and Section 1 of the India and Burma (Temporary and Miscellaneous Provisions) Act, 1942.*]

314

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 20

L/P&J/8/652: f 159

India

Bengal Situation

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *10 January 1944*

If the War Cabinet approve the Viceroy's proposal for the suspension of the Ministry in Bengal (W.P. (44) 18)[1] it will be necessary to issue at the appropriate moment a statement of the reasons for this step. I therefore append for consideration in conjunction with that paper a draft of such a statement prepared after consultation with the Viceroy.[2]

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 314

DRAFT STATEMENT

The Governor of Bengal, with the concurrence of the Governor-General, has decided that in the existing circumstances the Government of the Province cannot be carried on in accordance with the provisions of the Government of India Act, 1935; and he is issuing a proclamation under Section 93 by which he is assuming the powers vested in the Ministry and Legislature. The Governor is convinced that the situation is now such as cannot be met by Ministerial Government; and that the controversies and delays which are, in the present circumstances of Bengal, inevitable with a Political Ministry, must be superseded by a direct administration. The arrangements for receiving, accounting for, and storing food-grains imported into the Province have fallen short of what the situation required; measures for enforcement of the Foodgrains Control Order and apprehension and punishment of offenders against it have been deficient; there has been three months' delay in carrying out the rationing scheme for Calcutta;[3] there is no satisfactory assurance that the distribution of the *aman* harvest, on which the safety of Bengal immediately depends, will be effectively achieved; or that organisation of medical relief will ensure that the spread of disease among an undernourished population will be prevented.

[1] No. 313.

[2] See No. 301, para. 12. Discussion with the Viceroy on the draft statement took place in tels. 54–S of 7 January, 699 and 700 of 8 January, 70–S of 9 January, and 807 and 808 of 10 January. L/PO/10/25 and L/P&J/8/652.

[3] In tel. 80–S of 11 January, Lord Wavell strongly recommended the omission of 'three months' in reference to the Calcutta rationing scheme as it might lead to argument. L/PO/10/25.

Experience has shown that under present exceptional conditions a Ministry is incapable of enforcing the measures which must be carried through at once if a disaster comparable with that of last year is to be avoided.

Failure in any or all of these respects, apart from the suffering that would thereby be caused to the people of Bengal, would gravely prejudice the conduct of operations against Japanese in regard to which Bengal is in the front line. The operations of the South-East Asia Command, in which American aid is intimately involved and which are of the highest importance to the United Nations, must not be hampered by inadequate administration. The Governor cannot, with due regard to his responsibilities, acquiesce in a situation which not only gravely hampers the recovery of the Province from the late disaster, but threatens a further period of economic trouble which would again impose a heavy strain on other parts of India and on sources of supply outside India which are themselves likely to be severely taxed in meeting the requirements of India as a whole and of the other United Nations and may prove an impediment to the most effective prosecution of the war.

315

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *11 January 1944, 1.15 am*
Received: 10 January, 10.45 pm

No. 79–S. Your telegram No. 40,[1] dated January 10th. Bengal. I have not discussed Section 93 with Council. But comments of Members on weekly food summary[2] show that they are all gravely disturbed at lack of progress and that majority favour strong action by the Centre. Muslim Members would probably dislike Section 93 but I think Sultan Ahmed and Azizul Haque would acquiesce in it and that Firoz Khan would not do more than protest. Usman told me that he would support me in any action I took. Hindu Members would be in favour. Srivastava has officially recommended establishment by Bengal Government of Food Board by direction under Section 126–A and amendment of Constitution Act to bring food within discretionary field when Governors think this necessary. But he is convinced that no Ministry can make a success of food and is deterred from suggesting stronger action by fear of Muslim League accusations of Mahasabha prejudice. Chief and Maxwell alone are aware of my recommendations. Neither has expressed any objection. I believe Raisman's view to be that Section 93 at present juncture would be unwise on political grounds but this is casually expressed opinion.

2. Open discussion has been quite impossible owing to need for secrecy. You may take it that majority of Council would favour action proposed but that Indian Members including Hindus would not wish to be associated with it and would expect me to take the entire responsibility. This is in line with the constitutional position and we cannot expect anything more definite.

3. I saw Nazimuddin today and expressed my dissatisfaction with state of affairs in Bengal. His attitude was that things would be all right if his political opponents would give him a chance and Centre would not interfere. Suhrawardy who is also in Delhi saw Jenkins, and was inclined to be truculent about interference by Centre but departed on a more subdued note.

[1] No. 312. [2] 'weekly food summary' deciphered as 'Weightman's food summary'.

316

Governor-General (Food Department) to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *11 January 1944, 5.40 pm*
SECRET *Received: 11 January, 11.40 pm*

No. 297. Your telegram No. 73[1] of 1st January. Foodgrains imports. If all facts and arguments which have already been supplied by us since July 15th and in Gregory Committee Report[2] (especially Chapters 2, 4, 6 and 8) have failed to carry conviction we feel somewhat at a loss how to present our case more effectively by correspondence.

It is wrong to assume (1) that our previous demands were inflated and not real import needs of country; (2) that present shortage is a short-term problem due to administrative shortcomings, correction of which will remove problem; and (3) that sufficient reserves to influence situation can be built up out of indigenous resources.

Plain fact is that even in years of best harvest, there is absolute shortage in India, and concrete evidence of this is history of Bengal, Deccan and Malabar in 1943, the first year in which "carry-over" had been consumed and full impact of loss of imports was felt by India. Against increase of cultivation must be set off increase of population at the rate of at least 5 million a year.

2. Questions for His Majesty's Government are whether relief of foreigners in Europe is to take precedence over feeding our own people in India: whether risk of famine and unrest in main base of operations against Japan advances consummation of United Nations' effort towards ending the war: whether they prefer to condemn Government of India to ceaseless and doubtful struggle to

[1] No. 292. [2] See No. 197, note 2.

stave off constant threat of local famine and inflation by hand-to-mouth methods or will use part of admitted increase in shipping to get situation under control forthwith.

3. We propose to answer your paragraph 3 separately,[3] but warn you that such details are only remotely relevant to main argument that without assurance of adequate imports we cannot effectively begin to control prices, purchase food, ration towns or build reserves.

4. If you wish us to justify mathematically every ton of imports we have asked for, we cannot do so, for statistics are not available. War has caused us to lose net average imports of one million tons and war inflation has caused to be consumed or otherwise disappear bulk of surpluses normally retained by producers which serve as "buffer" reserve stock. Import requirements should be taken as constant, whether harvests are good or bad, for years of good harvest do not substantially lessen requirements from outside since producers, normally undernourished, will eat more if they can get it, or will keep more back as reserve. Aggravation of this tendency due to war conditions causes famines in deficit areas. Administrative measures can check this tendency but are severely handicapped without assured backing of physical stocks. What we lack is rice but we cannot import it. We therefore need assurance of imports of most acceptable substitute (wheat not barley) at least equivalent to normal net imports *plus* reserve. If we get firm promise that one-and-a-half (1½) million tons will be available if required we may not need to take it all—announcement itself accompanied by substantial arrivals just before harvest would have great psychological effect, but we do not consider that announcement of any figure less than 1 million tons will help us to control situation within any relevant time.

5. Your paragraph 5. Firstly, for present purposes nothing is gained by enunciating that from long-term point of view India ought to be self-sufficient. If all the millions of cultivators could be induced to use known methods of improving output considerable improvement in the position might result but with existing agricultural staffs it is vain to expect marked improvement within current year. Secondly, if it is implied that in five months we should have increased acreage under food crops enough to offset bad monsoon we would reply that it is precisely the areas most affected by absence of rain which have registered the largest increases in acreage. Crops cannot be grown at any time which happens to be convenient and the Government of India is not in a position to dictate how much rain shall fall in a particular area. It is the failure of current crops grown upon currently cultivated land that we have now to take into account. Thirdly, if it is implied that we should now be ready to reduce consumption all over India we would reply that at least one-third of the population is already undernourished: that we have been struggling to provide Bengal with foodgrains and have consequently squeezed the rest of India: that

we are pushing on with rationing and other administrative measures: that we have been engaged in painful controversies with the Punjab and Sind over price-control and that we cannot proclaim publicly a further deterioration of the situation without running the risk of serious loss of confidence in those parts of India which have hitherto given us least anxiety, especially in view of the widespread publicity which has inevitably been given to the Bengal situation. As for the suggestion that three hundred thousand tons should have been sufficient to allay all our anxieties we would merely point out that amount barely covers additional army demands with nothing over to relieve the general situation.

6. Your paragraph 6. 1944 requirement in foodgrains and pulses of non-Indian troops, including U.S.A., Chinese, West Africans, East Africans and British additional to pre-war strength is 181,480 tons. Also assuming that consumption on military ration is 50 per cent. higher than that of civil life, additional demand on resources of the country, represented by very large increase in the Indian Army, would be approximately 180,000 tons per annum. Similar increase on account of labour employed on Defence Works might amount to 50,000 tons.

As regards incompleted 1943 indents, your assumption is confirmed. 73,000 tons of wheat-products were outstanding from 1943 demands, and would have to be provided in 1944 or Defence Services reserves would be depleted by that quantity.

As regards operational arguments, famine and epidemics in any part of India involving diversion of troops and transport to help civil authority necessarily affect conduct of military operations. The present state of affairs in Bengal is a serious threat to the security of an operational base and to the health of troops.

7. Your paragraph 7. We are surprised that His Majesty's Government should still doubt that we have attempted to cope with the problem of prices not only directly by improving purchasing methods, control over transport, introduction of rationing and use of the Foodgrains Control Order but also by such indirect anti-inflationary measures as are open to us. These have been fully explained to you and we must repeat our regret that the silver bullion which we have repeatedly asked for[4] as an anti-inflationary check should not have been made available to us. Strenuous efforts are being made to secure increased civil supplies for the cultivator and to check profiteering by middle-men on which points detailed information has already been sent to you.

8. We have constantly reiterated our view that so long as the demands upon India are governed by the necessities of war rather than by the ability of India

[3] See Food Dept. tel. 296 of 10 January. L/PO/10/25.
[4] See Vol. III, No. 736, in this Vol. No. 32, para. 2 and L/F/7/448–9.

to stand further drains upon her resources and her revenue machinery all price control measures are liable to be upset by the widening of the inflationary gap. We reaffirm that you can rely on us to do our best in the forthcoming budget to cope with the ever-present menace of inflation. But we are clear that defective price control alone is not the main cause of difficulty. We now face physical shortage of wheat as last year we faced physical shortage of rice. Military demands are rapidly increasing. No measures taken in the price control field can prevent the ryot from holding off the market and with the experience of Bengal fresh in his mind it would be unnatural for him to sell as freely as normally. Even the fixation of *kharif* prices now under discussion is made immensely more difficult since if the *rabi* proves to be defective, pressure upon other crops will *ipso facto* increase and any prices fixed now may then prove too low and drive the remaining available supplies of *kharif* grains underground. Mere anticipation of a shorter crop will have a bad influence. Moreover the wheat-growing areas will certainly demand higher prices and as soon as food prices rise we must reckon with a new blow to public confidence. In these circumstances there would remain only one last resort, *namely*, requisitioning from the cultivator at prices fixed by Government. The technical difficulties are reviewed in Chapter 6, paragraph 20, *et seq* of the Foodgrains Report, and are serious. Apart from these, however, since in our judgment any attempt at such requisitioning in the Punjab would entail the resignation of the Ministry followed by a first-class political crisis which might extend to all the Muslim League Provinces, we could not proceed without the danger of widespread disaffection among the Muslims in the Army and the possible employment of large army formations (disaffection notwithstanding) in maintaining order in the rural districts. These risks appear to us to be so grave that we could not resort to requisitioning from the growers in the Punjab without the most positive orders to do so of His Majesty's Government and without an explicit statement on their part that they recognise the dangers involved and are prepared to accept full responsibility for all the consequences.

317

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: ff 44–6

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *11 January 1944, 1.45 am*

PRIVATE

43. Food Imports. Your private telegram 26–S[1] dated 4th January. I feel strongly as you do that utmost must be done to avoid further breakdown next autumn and I am deeply impressed by your strong conviction that this postu-

lates continuance of shipments on substantial scale. It is precisely for this reason that I ask to be furnished with means to meet arguments and questions with which I shall be faced. I hope therefore your telegram does not mean that your Government will fail to supply fully materials requested in my official telegram No. 73.[2] I am convinced that nothing but an impregnable reasoned case has any chance of success. Position is indeed stiffer than previously, as evidenced by Leathers' suggestion that even shipments already promised might be forgone.[3] Nor do I think we can find anything unreasonable in requirement that case be proved on each occasion as circumstances change.

2. I trust therefore that full and watertight replies will be forthcoming shortly to all questions in paragraphs 2 to 7 of my official telegram. In particular, I am anxious to have answer to 3(e) with especial reference to possibility of building up reserve in part or whole from indigenous produce while crops are coming in and grain relatively plentiful; and to paragraph 4 since argument consisting of calculation based on average actual importations of previous years is unlikely to carry weight with my colleagues who will point out that no country can expect nowadays to keep its imports up to level of past averages.

3. You can be sure there is no question of failing to trust man on the spot. I and my colleagues of course attach greatest possible weight to your considered judgment of India's situation and needs. You will, however, recognise that devotion of additional ships to grain for India must have adverse effect on matters outside India for which others are responsible. If I may with suitable diffidence suggest a military analogy, War Cabinet are in a position of an army commander who receives urgent appeals for reinforcements from several sectors and cannot meet all in full. He alone can assess situation as a whole and decide which sectors must go short. For this purpose he needs full and clear information about position on each sector and request for this would be entirely consistent with absolute confidence in the judgment and skill of individual commanders.

[1] No. 295. [2] No. 292. [3] See No. 309.

318

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: ff 115–16

INDIA OFFICE, *11 January 1944, 9 am*

816. Your telegram 27–S[1] of 4th January.

1. War Cabinet have directed that India's representative should arrive some time before Prime Ministers' meeting *vide* my private and personal telegram

[1] No. 296.

of 27th September[2] to Linlithgow if left on record. I think it would do quite well if they arrived by 10th April.

2. In theory there is open invitation to Dominions and India to be represented at War Cabinet but only Australia has taken continuous advantage of this offer. I agree that if Indian representatives come back to War Cabinet they could not be limited in advance as to time they will stay here, but I cannot be confident that there will be much for them to do and they may very well prefer to return after a month or two. Something may depend on how long it suits Dominion Ministers to remain also on whether you have in mind to fill the vacant post on your Council and subsequently reabsorb additional member or to leave a temporary vacancy in the department. How much there will be to do here depends a good deal on course of events.

3. Jam Sahib did well here and I should be glad to have him again, but I do not press this if you feel some other arrangement is preferable. I have always regarded Bhopal as most suitable Moslem Prince and see no reason why you should not postpone choice of Princely representative until after Chamber of Princes meets. I have no objection to 2 Moslems coming if you are satisfied that this will not cause trouble.

4. It will be necessary when the time comes to explain to representatives selected their status at the War Cabinet and occasions when they will be invited to attend, see my personal telegram of 27th June 1942, No. 11468,[3] and connected correspondence.

[2] L/PO/6/111. [3] Vol. II, No. 191.

319

Lord Leathers to Mr Amery

L/E/8/3322: f 34

BERKELEY SQUARE HOUSE, W.1, *11 January 1944*

My dear Amery,

Thank you for your letter of the 8th January[1] about the wheat shipments for India.

As you say, we have agreed that you will let me know when you have further information from the Viceroy. My expectation, however, is that this will entitle us to restore to the areas from which it was diverted on account of the acute position in India, some of the wheat etc. which is now en route and of course that which has yet to be shipped.

Yours ever,

FRED LEATHERS

[1] No. 309.

320

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 5th Conclusions, Minute 1

L/P&J/8/652: ff 141–4

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 11 January 1944 at 10.30 am were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton, Mr R. G. Casey

Also present during discussion of item 1 were: Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Cherwell

INDIA

Situation in Bengal

The War Cabinet considered the following:—

A Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P (44) 18)[1] covering an exchange of telegrams with the Viceroy in which the view was strongly expressed by Lord Wavell that the Bengal situation could only be safeguarded, and a danger of recurrence of famine avoided, if the Ministry were dismissed, and government by the Governor by proclamation under Section 93 of the Government of India Act was established.

A further exchange of telegrams (657[2] to the Viceroy and 64–S[3] from the Viceroy); and

A further memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 20)[4] covering a draft of the statement which it would be necessary to issue if the Viceroy's proposal were approved.

THE S./S. FOR INDIA said that, in his telegrams, the Viceroy had made it clear that by whatever means, the responsibility for control of the food situation in Bengal must be taken out of the hands of the Ministry. In his telegram 38–S[5] of the 6th January the Viceroy discussed five methods which had been suggested as theoretically possible, and explained his reasons for favouring the adoption of the fifth method—the dismissal of the Ministry for failure to take the necessary food measures, accompanied by the issue of a proclamation under Section 93 by the Governor assuming to himself the powers of the Ministry.

In support of the view that drastic action of some kind was necessary, the S./S. gave a number of instances, in the sphere of public health, to illustrate the inability of the Government of Bengal to carry out their responsibilities in times of crisis. He was advised that some 50 per cent. of this year's grain crops would

[1] No. 313. [2] No. 308. [3] No. 311. [4] No. 314. [5] No. 301.

normally be marketed during the next three months, and that there was a grave danger that, if the Ministry remained in control, they would not take the action necessary to ensure that a considerable proportion of the crop did not go underground.

It was clear, however, that the application of Section 93 would have grave repercussions. It was true that there would be no legal way in which the Governor's decision to apply the Section could be challenged. The Ministry would, however, protest on the grounds that the action had been taken because the present Ministry was a predominantly Moslem League Government, and this might lead both to unrest in Bengal and to the resignation of Moslem League Governments in other Provinces. This step should not, therefore, be taken unless it was really necessary, in order to avoid the recurrence of famine.

No doubt it was a serious matter to reject the Viceroy's considered opinion. The Secretary of State wondered, however, whether the necessary results might not be achieved by a combination of the first two methods discussed in Lord Wavell's telegram No. 38–S—namely, a decision by the Governor that the circumstances were such that his special responsibility under Section 52–(1) (*a*) was attracted in regard to food administration, which would enable him to override the Ministry as he thought fit; and the use by the Central Government of its powers under Section 126A.

In conclusion, the Secretary of State read out a telegram No. 79–S[6] in which the Viceroy reported that he had not discussed the proposed application of Section 93 with his Executive Council, but gave an estimate of their views as indicated by their comments on reports regarding the food situation in Bengal. The general conclusion reached by the Viceroy was that the majority of his Executive Council would favour the proposed action, but that the Indian members, including Hindus, would not wish to be associated with it and would expect him to take entire responsibility.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that Lord Wavell had evidently formed a very unfavourable opinion of the efficiency of the Bengal Government. The War Cabinet had not, however, been informed of the considered views of the senior officers serving in the Province.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer referred to the instances mentioned by the Secretary of State and those cited in telegram 38–S, as to the ineffectiveness of various officials in the Bengal Province. He said that it would appear that the responsibility for several of the appointments in question rested with the Centre, and not with the Provincial Government.[7] If the Government of India, in justification of the use of Section 93, were to rely on some of the instances of inefficiency which had been cited to the War Cabinet, he thought that they might find themselves on very insecure ground.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that, in his view, the Governor of Bengal could clearly exercise his individual judgment in matters affecting the supply of food or the health of the people, as being matters which were closely bound up with good government.[8] Moreover, it was important to bear in mind the procedure when a Governor decided to exercise his individual judgment in regard to a particular matter. It was not the case that the Minister concerned first carried [came] to a definite conclusion and then submitted the matter for further consideration by the Governor. In practice, what happened was that the Minister consulted with the Governor before deciding what action should be taken, and no question arose of the Minister being formally over-ridden by the Governor. Moreover, all orders were issued as orders of Government, and there was nothing to indicate that certain orders were issued as a result of the Governor exercising his individual judgment. The whole arrangement thus worked quite smoothly.

If, on the other hand, recourse was made to Section 93, and the present Government was dismissed, the Hindus would be delighted. More of the Moslems would stand back and do nothing, and some would be actively hostile. In the result the Government of Bengal would be left without friends.

It was a serious matter to over-ride the Viceroy's considered judgment, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer suggested that, in any event, the newly-appointed Governor should be given time to find his feet and to establish relations with the Government of Bengal. If, after experience of trying to work with the Bengal Government, Mr. Casey found that it was impossible to carry on, the question of recourse to Section 93 could always be considered. But he sincerely hoped that Mr. Casey would find it possible to work through the Ministry, on the lines which he had suggested.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR expressed agreement with these views. He felt sure that, even if the existing Ministry were dismissed, it would not be possible to produce a really effective organisation at all quickly. In his view, the use of Section 93 would probably result in worsening the position in Bengal. He did not favour dismissing the Bengal Government except for explicit refusal to carry out clear-cut orders.

The Secretary of State for War also referred to a report in *The Times* that morning according to which the views of the Centre were prejudiced in the eyes of the Bengal Ministry, by the fact that they happened to coincide with those of the political opposition in Bengal. This might have serious political consequences.

6 No. 315.

7 Mr Baxter minuted on this sentence: 'it is not clear what appointments the Chancellor can have been referring to'.

8 Mr Baxter minuted on this sentence: 'The passage . . . is queer. There is no "special responsibility" for maintaining good government!'

THE LORD CHANCELLOR was opposed to the use of Section 93 at this juncture, which he would regard as an extreme step. He quoted the terms of Section 52–(1) (*a*) of the Government of India Act, and thought that the acting Governor of Bengal was wrong in thinking that the present situation in Bengal was not sufficient to justify him, under this Section, in exercising his special responsibility in food and health matters.

THE FOREIGN SECRETARY also expressed agreement with the views of the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION was of the same opinion. In his view the use, at this juncture, of Section 93 would create the worst possible impression, at the time when the new Governor of Bengal took over. It would make the whole Province hostile to us. Moreover, he did not feel that a case had been established which would justify recourse to Section 93 against the present Government. Responsibility for most of the matters referred to seemed to rest with the previous Government of Fazlul Huq.

MR. CASEY agreed that it was a serious matter to overrule the Viceroy's considered judgment, but favoured an effort to work through the existing Government, rather than to break with it. He referred, in this connection, to the need for making the best use of all available resources, including those from outside the Province.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER in this connection suggested that as many as possible of the members of the I.C.S., now serving the Centre, who had previous service in Bengal, should be made available for service in Bengal during the present emergency.

The War Cabinet's decisions were as follows:—

(1) Of the five methods of removing food from Ministerial control, set out by the Viceroy in Telegram 38–S of the 6th January, the War Cabinet rejected (3)—amendment of the Constitution Act—and (4) and (5)—the application of Section 93 to the Bengal Government.

(2) The right line of action was for the Governor to decide that the circumstances were such that his special responsibility was attracted under Section 52–(1) *a* of the Government of India Act in regard to food and health administration (the Viceroy's course (1)) as well as in respect of the proper execution of directions from the Central Government under Section 126A.

(3) In communicating this decision to the Viceroy reference should be made to the methods and procedure whereby the Governor of a Province would normally exercise his special responsibilities, as explained by the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

(4) The Secretary of State for India was invited to prepare a telegram to the Viceroy setting out the War Cabinet's views. This telegram should be shown to the Deputy Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer and, subject to their concurrence, should be despatched without further reference to the War Cabinet.

321

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3322: f 35

PRIVATE *12 January 1944, 11.55 pm*

98–S. Your telegram No. 43[1] of January 11th. Food imports. Official reply[2] has been sent to your telegram No. 73[3] of January 1st.

2. My whole point is that as long as the War Cabinet thinks of India in terms of U.K. they are asking for the impossible and will be disappointed. Following are main features.

(1) Large, perhaps greater, part of Indian population is chronically underfed. Total of Indian population (sic ? production) plus average annual imports therefore does not repeat not represent excessive or even adequate supply from which deductions can be made on austerity basis. Imports on scale demanded are thus necessary on supply grounds alone, and prospect of building up reserves from indigenous produce alone is nil.

(2) Indigenous produce comes from millions of small holdings. Price control even with full co-operation of majority of growers, dealers and Provincial Governments would not be an easy matter. Provincial Governments are under constant pressure from agricultural interests to maintain and even increase prices and in some ministerial provinces would break away if they felt they could do so. Imports on scale demanded are essential to price control. If price control breaks we cannot control inflation.

(3) Strength of fighting services has risen to about 2 million and their food requirements are not covered by specific additional imports. Indians included in total are not new mouths to feed, but their army rations are far more liberal than what they would consume in their homes.

(4) Statistical system exists mainly for purposes of land revenue administration and is limited to bare needs. In permanent settled areas statistics are sometimes guess-work. Even with perfect statistical system we would remain at the mercy of capricious rainfall and accurate forecasts are quite impossible. In 1944

[1] No. 317. [2] No. 316. [3] No. 292.

lateness and inadequacy of winter rain may wipe out large part of Punjab wheat surplus.

(5) India has always been lightly administered and the deterioration due to provincial autonomy and other changes in last 20 odd years make effective controls difficult even with reasonable public co-operation. Public are largely indifferent or hostile to controls and tendency is for every man to look after his own stomach or pocket.

(6) Increased production of food is possible mainly on unirrigated land and steady increase is most difficult to secure owing to uncertainty of rains.

3. It is quite clear to me that throughout 1944 I shall have a hard struggle to hold prices and to stave off shortages and actual famine. I may not be able to prove this to the satisfaction of the War Cabinet, but the facts are quite evident here. Please tell your colleagues that they have been warned.[4]

[4] In tel. 1402 of 17 January, Mr Turnbull asked Sir E. Jenkins if No. 321 might be used in putting up the Indian case to the Cabinet. In tel. 140–S of 18 January, Sir E. Jenkins replied that there was no objection to the tel.'s use either in whole or part. L/E/8/3322.

322

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: ff 147–9

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *12 January 1944, 3.30 pm*

936. Bengal situation.

1. War Cabinet have given earnest consideration[1] to your recommendation[2] in favour of immediate recourse to section 93. They fully recognise the strength of the case you have put forward and the weight of your responsibilities. But they are definitely of the opinion that the case for enforcement of section 93 against the present Bengal Ministry is not strong enough to outweigh the grave political objections as well as the communal repercussions which might seriously handicap a new Governor at the start and contribute to defeating his efforts.

2. They feel that the present Ministry if dismissed would have a plausible and indeed strong case for complaining that they have been sacrificed for the failure of their predecessors as well as to the clamour of their political opponents, without being given a fair chance to set their house in order. Hindu rejoicing at the discomfiture of a Muslim Government would not mean active help to the new administration, which might have to begin with everybody's hand against it, since[3] it is to be apprehended that *supporters of former Ministry might show their resentment by engineering*[4] obstruction at all levels especially[5] in Eastern Bengal. This apart from wider repercussions in Muslim India or outside.

3. Moreover Cabinet are not convinced that the objects in view cannot be attained in large measure by friendly but firm handling of Ministry by a new Governor who will make it clear from the outset that he intends to regard his special responsibility attracted not only in respect of the full and continuous carrying into effect of the general directives of the Central Government, but also under Section 52–(1) (*a*) in any aspect of the food or health situation in regard to which he may decide to take a strong line. In this connexion Rutherford's hesitation to treat 52–(1) (*a*) as attracted is not regarded as justified.[6] They do not see why the necessary changes of staff whether in reserved posts or otherwise should not be carried out equally effectively and promptly by the firm application of this method and hope that it may be possible for you to spare from elsewhere good men, especially men with Bengal experience, to make good present deficiencies.

4. After all, it is just in order to make such a policy succeed that a man of Casey's personality and experience has been chosen, and it is only fair to him to give him that chance. Application of section 93 just before his arrival would inevitably now be supposed to have been engineered by him. As things are he should start with a Ministry not unwilling to be guided and in a strong position to point out to them that it is only by wholeheartedly working with him that they can ensure the continuance of the help, financial and otherwise, essential to see Bengal through its difficulties. If in the course of a few weeks he is convinced that through obstructiveness or weakness they will not play up he will be on much better ground for forcing their resignation or even dismissing them.

5. Casey was present at the Cabinet discussion and can give you a fuller account of the arguments used.

[1] No. 320. [2] No. 301. [3] 'since' deciphered as 'At the same time'.
[4] The passage in italics replaced at Sir J. Anderson's suggestion the words 'ex-Ministers might engineer' in the draft of this tel. L/P&J/8/652.
[5] 'at all levels especially' omitted in decipher.
[6] Subsequent correspondence between Sir D. Monteath and Sir E. Jenkins on legal aspects of the Bengal situation, particularly the construction of Section 52–(1) (*a*), is in L/PO/10/25.

323

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: ff 47–8

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *12 January 1944, 4 pm*
PRIVATE

48. Bengal situation. I hope you will not be too disappointed at Cabinet decision communicated in my telegram No. 936 dated 12/1. I put your case as

strongly as I could and specially emphasised point that crucial period in procurement operations is next few weeks and also shortcomings of Bengal Ministry in matters of food and public health administration. I confess, however, I do not disagree with Cabinet's conclusion and must share to the full the responsibility for the risk we assume of the possibility of the crop going underground irretrievably through weak handling during the next few weeks. I know you will give Casey all the help you can to enable him to make a success of the policy on which Cabinet have decided.

2. I understand Casey is now meeting you in Lucknow and that suggestion has been made that he might go to Delhi on his way to Bengal to see Food Department. As much will turn in success of policy now to be pursued on Casey's relations with Ministry I feel it would be a mistake for him to go out of his way to see Srivastava before he goes to Bengal. Ministry would regard him as having listened to views of Food Member before he was cognisant of Bengal position or had heard their case. It seems to me therefore that it would be much preferable for him not to go to Delhi until he has been in Bengal for at any rate a week or two, but perhaps you would consider possibility of asking Hutchings to come to Lucknow to meet him there after his conversations with you.

324

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *12 January 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

There is no new letter in from you, and as I have written twice, on 6th[1] and 8th January,[2] within the last seven days, this one will be short.

2. The possibility of Rowlands for the Finance Membership (see my private telegram No. 63–S[3] of 9th January) has occurred to various people beside myself. I do not know how far the experts would regard him as qualified, but he has vitality and the urge to get things done, which are half the battle in India at present. He also has an intimate knowledge both of Whitehall and of New Delhi, which is extremely rare, and might be very much more effective than an entirely new man. I have no idea whether Rowlands would accept the appointment if it were offered to him.

3. I am still undecided about the new Home Member. He will have to be an official, and the field of choice is small as experience of a particular kind is required. In the ordinary way I should certainly take someone like Mudie, or Thorne, but I have been considering the possibility of selecting an Indian.

Trivedi might make quite a good Home Member, but I am not sure that the appointment of an Indian official would have any political value, and perhaps not much educational value; and once the selection has to be made among officials, it is for obvious reasons very difficult to prefer a British or Indian officer as such. Service feeling in these matters cannot be disregarded. I hope to come to a definite decision within a few days, and shall then telegraph to you. I still think that it is a great pity that the appointment of an Indian to the Finance portfolio was not approved; it would have been easier and more appropriate than the Home Membership; and they have got to learn to handle their own finances soon.

4. Some progress was made with reconstruction planning at a meeting of the Reconstruction Committee of Council on 8th January, at which I presided. The trouble is that the Reconstruction Committee of Council and its satellite Committees, though necessary, are unable to feed themselves properly, and are reaching a stage at which they must be regularly fed if definite results are to be secured. We seem to be getting into a vicious circle in which the Policy Committees, composed of officials and non-officials, and presided over by Members of Council, are about to debate on reconstruction at large with no general plans in front of them, while the Official Committees, which are composed of Secretaries and are required to prepare the basic material, are about to report that they can make little progress without policy guidance. I came to the conclusion that certain subjects—electrification, industrial development, road development, irrigation and agricultural improvement—had better be entrusted to individual officials, working whole time, who would be responsible to the appropriate departments for the preparation of all-India plans. These planners would be assisted by panels of experts nominated by the Centre, and by representatives of the Provinces and the larger States. They would be entirely responsible for their own reports, but would have to indicate on whom they had called for assistance and advice, and to what extent. Many of the questions of policy which are troubling the Departments would be thrown up and decided in the course of their enquiries. But there are other big questions affecting the whole reconstruction field such as tariff policy, the proposed international monetary arrangements, and the like, on which Council must have some broad general views at a fairly early date. The Committee of Council accepted the proposal for the appointment of individual planners for specified subjects, and agreed that a preliminary examination should be made of the general policy questions affecting the whole field. As Mudaliar remarked during the discussion, we cannot say what agreements will be reached on international trade and currency problems in the post-war period, but it is impossible to delay all our planning on this account. Planning must therefore proceed on certain

[1] No. 298; the date(s) should be 5–6 January. [2] No. 310. [3] L/PO/8/52b.

assumptions, and the Executive Council must say what those assumptions should be. I hope that we may now be able to make some progress with the subjects for which special officers are being appointed, and that this method may be extended to other subjects also. Some of my colleagues want to appoint a full-dress industrial Commission, but I think I shall try to avoid this if possible; I have no great belief in such bodies. I am trying to get a visit of big Indian industrialists to United Kingdom (and United States of America if they want to, I suppose) organised at an early date. If the proposal comes up to you, please give it not merely a fair wind but a good half-gale.

5. I have made little progress on the question of appointing a whole-time Reconstruction Member. I am clear that if we could get the right man, the appointment would be valuable. A figure-head would be a nuisance, and would probably annoy his colleagues without getting us anywhere. There is a lamentable shortage of talent. I might be able to find a competent Indian official, but the appointment would lose some of its political importance if it were held by an official. There is a rumour that Krishnamachari may be leaving Baroda, and if he does, he might be suitable. Wylie is far from certain about him, and has promised to let me know what he thinks after he has visited Baroda during the next few weeks. I have never met Krishnamachari myself.

6. I do not seem to have told you about the opening of the Indian Science Congress on the 3rd January. The admission of the Indian Fellows to the Royal Society seems to have had a good press in the United Kingdom and was fairly well received here. Only two were admitted of the four awaiting admission. Originally it seemed probable that none of the new Fellows except Bhatnagar would attend, and Hill was worried at this exhibition of hostility. I believe that it was due mainly to some feud between Raman and the Indian Science Congress. But, whatever the reasons may be, it was unfortunate that all four Fellows were not admitted. My own speech was short, and I said nothing controversial. Hill is doing very well, I think, and personally very popular.

7. There has been some rain during the last few days, and although it is late, and so far inadequate, it is a good deal better than nothing, and *Rabi* prospects are brighter than they were last week. The Food Department held their Conference on the prices of *Kharif* food-grains on 6th and 7th January. The western and southern region including Bombay, the Central Provinces, Madras, Hyderabad, Mysore, Travancore and Cochin, seems to have its prices pretty well under control, and I gather there will be little difficulty in maintaining uniformity, though the Governments of Madras and the Central Provinces are reluctant to notify their maximum prices. They prefer to work to them by executive action without legal sanction. The north-western region, in which the main units are Sind, the North-West Frontier Province, the Punjab and the United Provinces, gave some difficulty. The Governments of the Punjab and

the United Provinces said it was impossible to fix *Kharif* prices now as *Rabi* prospects were so uncertain that they might be unable to hold them. The Government of Sind pressed as before for an increase in their *Kharif* prices. The Government of the North-West Frontier Province would, I believe, follow the Punjab. In the eastern region, Bihar and Orissa are working to prices for paddy far lower than those in Assam and Bengal, and all that can be done is to try to work the Assam and Bengal prices down to a reasonable figure which will then be held by all Provinces. The Food Member was unable to announce definite decisions at the end of the Conference, and the whole matter comes before us in Council on the 15th January.

[Para. 8, on a suggested Government of India Hospitality Fund, omitted.]

9. You will remember mentioning in your private telegram No. 1293[4] of December 7th that you had been inadequately informed of the cholera epidemic in Bengal. A letter,[5] of which Thorne has sent a copy to Patrick, has now been sent to all Governors' Secretaries asking them to see that special reports are sent to you direct about any serious development in public health, famine or other aspects of the economic situation. I hope this will meet the case, but if you find any further difficulty, please let me know.

10. You have no doubt seen my War Department's telegram No. 228,[6] dated 10th January, about the proposed combined Committee consisting of United States and United Kingdom representatives to examine India's economic capacity. I doubt whether the Americans will recognise our limitations in India until the whole question has been examined by a Committee accepted by them as impartial. This was the ground taken by my advisers here. But unless you take very special measures at your end to get the Committee appointed quickly, it may be months before anything happens. I shall be grateful for anything you can do.

11. I raised the question in Council this morning of an enquiry into the Bengal famine. As I told you,[7] we were forced at the last session of the Legislature to accept a motion for an enquiry of some sort, though we refused to commit ourselves as to date or details. As we are certain to be challenged on this at the next session, I thought we had better get our attitude clear, so put a tentative proposal before Council informally this morning. The majority favoured a very early enquiry so long as it was constructive and not a post-mortem. You will have received a cable[8] from me on the subject before you get this.

13 January 1944

12. I have just received your telegram No. 936[9] of 12th January about Bengal. No further comment seems necessary at present. The War Cabinet

[4] No. 252. [5] Of 30 December 1943. L/P&J/7/6313. [6] L/F/File 6101 of 1944.
[7] No. 238, para. 3. [8] Nos. 326 and 327. [9] No. 322.

were very fully informed of my views and have rejected them. I trust that my recommendation about imports will not meet the same fate.

Bengal is a matter for the *gravest anxiety*. I should like everyone to be quite clear on this, as there seems to be a tendency for optimistic statements to be made, in the Press or elsewhere. Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy were here for the Conference on Prices and Jute Acreage last week, and did a good deal of canvassing. I saw Nazimuddin, who was obviously worried, and though I like him and believe his intentions are good, I am quite sure he is a bad administrator and too much in Suhrawardy's hands. Suhrawardy had a long talk with Jenkins and was inclined to be aggressive. He blamed the services for the slow progress made, and complained bitterly of the military demands on Bengal, and of Central interference with food policy. On Jenkins pointing out that his argument seemed to be that the Bengal Ministry had been placed by the Centre in a position in which it was impossible for them to carry on, he changed his tone, and said that administrative improvements were well in hand and implied that all would be well if the Centre would stop interfering. He is a strong talker but poor doer, and it is most unlikely that the staffs required both in Calcutta and in the Districts are being placed in position fast enough. The two Ministers did, I think, succeed in showing that directions under Section 126-A are of very little use, and that Central interference (except where some very clear issue is involved) wastes much time. The Food Department will probably drop their criticism[s] of the *Aman* procurement scheme, which have led simply to an argument without much substance to it.

Srivastava is deeply hurt at the attack[10] on him by the Joint Secretaries to the Bengal Ministerial Coalition Party, which appeared in the Press a few days ago. He was accused of being an agent of the Mahasabha, and of attempting to get the Ministry out. He seems to have spent a good deal of time with Nazimuddin and Suhrawardy about this during their stay here, and says that relations are now friendly. But I doubt it, and although the accusations against him are ridiculous, they have already affected the tone of the Hindu Press. I hope they will not affect Srivastava's judgment. He has said nothing to me yet, but he told Jenkins after yesterday's Council meeting that he was entirely in my hands—implying that he was ready to resign, and added that the Bengal Ministers knew they were heading for disaster, and were building up their defence in advance.

The sooner Casey can get into action, the better chance there is of saving the situation. It is a great pity he could not have been spared two months ago.

I am pretty sure that we should have had public opinion on the whole behind us, if we had gone into Section 93 in Bengal, whatever the Press might have said. The discussion on Food in the N.D.C., which has just begun, this morning tended to confirm this. They were practically all for the Centre taking a strong line.

[10] See No. 305, note 3.

325

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *12 January 1944*
Received: 27 January

We had a very full and earnest discussion on the Bengal situation in Cabinet yesterday.[1] I had, of course, circulated all your telegrams and supplemented your case by a good many detailed facts about the incompetence of the present Bengal situation. But in commending your conclusion on balance I was bound to say that I had been very much in two minds on the question and was very much alive to the difficulties and dangers of action under Section 93 and indeed I cannot say honestly that in the end, after hearing the whole discussion, I disagreed with the Cabinet's conclusion. That conclusion, which was undoubtedly unanimous, was not based in any measure upon any fear of the political effect on public opinion here or in the United States. It was very much based on what might be the effect in Bengal itself and in India outside Bengal of creating a situation in which the Muslims would be bitterly offended and even prepared to obstruct and sabotage the efforts of the new Governor, while the Hindus, crowing over the discomfiture of their opponents, would remain as disinclined to help as hitherto. With that objection went the strong feeling that the resources of the Governor's special responsibility under 52–(1) (*a*) for the peace and tranquillity of the Province, as well as his special responsibility for enforcing, not only specific detailed instructions from the Centre, but general directives from the Centre, had not really been tried out. Rutherford's attitude was simply not understood and Simon was unhesitatingly of the opinion that a situation of famine or impending famine certainly affected the peace and tranquillity of the Province. Anyhow, the Governor's view of the question cannot be challenged in the Courts and from the point of view of defending it in Parliament it certainly is a less far-fetched extension of the meaning of the Statute than would be involved in the use of Section 93 to dismiss a Ministry merely for ineffectiveness. They also felt that Casey would have a hopeless start, coming out immediately after such an announcement, which nobody would believe had not been prompted by himself. On the other hand, it was just in order to be able to carry out a policy in which the Governor could get what he wanted without suspending the Constitution that a man of Casey's experience and personality had been appointed.

2. Anyhow, there it is, and we must make the best of the decision and hope that Casey can get done what he and you want, and that some of the dangers

[1] No. 320.

which you have foreseen may not mature, or even if they begin to show themselves, can be set right in time. The most important thing, I gather, really, is that you should be able to help Casey by getting some good new blood into the Province, or rather infuse into it good elements in the service which have been transferred to other Provinces. Whether you can spare the men who would be most useful in Bengal from what they are doing now is another question and perhaps one impossible to solve. The terrible shortage of good men, and their war-weariness, is, I expect, almost your worst problem. Casey, I gather, has one or two men of his own whom he wants to secure, like Keith Murray and Elmhirst (who has Bengal experience) and I trust no difficulties over establishments of [? or] rates of pay will delay his getting them.

3. Possibly if Germany collapses this year we may be able to get out a certain number of specialists from the various Departments here who might be useful to you. The same, I dare say, may apply also to the Army. I mean that it might be worth while getting out a number of good officers to supply stiffening and fresh war experience to formations already in India. I don't know whether Auchinleck has already approached the War Office on this matter, but talking things over with Hartley just now I got the impression that officers are the great weakness right through in the Indian Army today as well as in the British units in India.

4. I have had a talk with Commodore French, R.N., who has been for some months Director of Training to the R.I.N. and is home on deputation to see what he can raise from the Admiralty in the way of additional R.N. or R.N.R. or R.N.V.R. officers either in the immediate future or after the German war is over. He raised with me the question of the future establishment of the R.I.N., pointing out that if that were not settled fairly soon the R.I.N. might lose a great many promising officers both Indian and European whom it has secured during the war. I pointed out to him that the general policy here and in India for all the Services was not to alter establishments until we knew after the war what the position is going to be and that in India there was the further question of the constitutional future. He pointed out, on the other hand, that in fact the R.I.N. had no sort of establishment before the war, no real training schools of any kind, and that even the most minimum establishment, based on the proper training of the smallest possible sea-going fleet, would still mean something in the nature of a real establishment quite different from what existed in 1939. Obviously, too, the question of India's naval defence is bound to loom much bigger after the war than in the past. If India were independent she undoubtedly would require a substantial fleet to protect her shores and shipping. Even as a member of the Commonwealth she would clearly have to do something to pull her weight on the naval side more than she did in the past and, so far at any rate as ships and equipment are concerned, has the accumulated sterling with

which she could buy from His Majesty's Government a quite substantial little fleet. There is great force to my mind in all these points and, though of course I put the present general rule to Commodore French, and said that in any case I must await the Government of India's recommendations in the matter, I have little doubt that there is much to be said for deciding even during the war on at any rate a basic establishment for the future, so as to be sure to keep or get the right personnel as well as, if necessary, the ships and equipment.

5. Your long and earnest telegram[2] about the food situation has just come in and I shall take it up with Leathers first and then with the War Cabinet as soon as possible. It is going to be terribly difficult to convince the War Cabinet that the shipping can be found and that India will not be able to worry through somehow, at any rate till after the German collapse. I wish I felt so certain that that collapse is going to occur before the end of the summer. Anyway, you can count on me to do my very best, but it will be an uphill discussion.

6. I have heard nothing since they have been out with you of your Minister of State Staff. Have they, I wonder, had very much to do, or have they been rather kicking their heels? Also, what is to happen if Mountbatten goes to Candy? Will you divide them up and in that case will you want somebody in the nature of a Deputy Minister of State attached to Mountbatten on the spot? I know it was originally contemplated that if his G.H.Q. did get beyond India something of the sort would be required, but at that time a sideways move to Ceylon was not in the picture.

7. I have discussed Rowlands with Anderson, who had, as a matter of fact, thought of him. The trouble with him is that, after all, his experience is only in the region of administrative and departmental finance, whereas what the Cabinet were most concerned with was a knowledge of the wider problems of international finance, which Rowlands can hardly be said to enjoy any more than Mudaliar or Jones. I believe Anderson has one or two other possibles in view and we must definitely try in the next few days to see if any of them is really available.

[Para. 8, on Sir Earle Page's suggestion that India might participate in the Empire Air Training Scheme; and para. 9, on the Save the Children Fund's anxiety at the use of their name by an Indian organisation, omitted.]

13 January 1944

10. I enclose with this a copy of a White Paper[3] on Mass Education in West Africa, which the Colonial Office has just put out, together with a *Times*[4] article on the subject. It is just possible that the White Paper may contain ideas of use

[2] No. 316. [3] *Mass Education in African Society*, H.M.S.O. (Colonial No. 186).
[4] Of 13 January.

in India, and if so you will no doubt let me know whether you would like me to send you out a batch for distribution among Provincial Governors and Provincial and State Education authorities. However, I dare say you have all you want for your purposes in Sargent's Report.[5]

11. I have just been having a talk with Sir Malcolm Robertson, M.P., Chairman of the British Council, and Sir Angus Gillan, the Director of the Imperial side of its activities, about an early visit of a delegation from the Council to consider in what ways and to what extent its activities in India might be developed. When I first raised[6] this question with Linlithgow more than a year ago he doubted[7] whether in the present mood of Indian nationalism there would be any friendly reception for the Council's activities. But all the reports which have reached me latterly point the other way and suggest that the development of the Council's purely non-political and literary activities would be welcomed and regarded as a compliment in many circles in India. That definitely was Joyce's conclusion and he telegraphed[8] at the time when he was out to say that the sooner the British Council came out on a visit the better, while Hill seems to have come to very much the same conclusion. I am therefore telegraphing[9] to you about this and hope you will approve and that the little delegation of two or three might be able to go out in the immediate future and then after its return home make its plans to send out lecturers, &c., next autumn.

12. A point arises in connection with the composition of the delegation. Malcolm Robertson is quite willing to go out himself and is a man of great enthusiasm and energy. But I am not quite sure whether the fact that he is a Conservative M.P. will not at once cause Indians to think that this is in some sense a Government scheme and make it more difficult for him to refuse to answer the political questions with which he will be deluged. There is also the awkwardness that might be involved if he were flown out, in view of what I have told Sorensen,[10] as to the impossibility of finding him an air passage. On the whole, therefore, I should be inclined to prefer the delegation to consist of Gillan and, say, some eminent literary professor, and a Secretary, and so avoid even the slightest flavour of politics.

5 See No. 198, note 4. 6 Vol. III, No. 264, paras. 8 and 9.
7 Vol. III, Nos. 315, para. 8 and 731, para. 13.
8 In tel. 8784 of 16 October. Mr Joyce felt there was a growing feeling among Indians, in no sense pro-British, that India's interests were likely to be served by remaining in the Commonwealth and this feeling was capable of being nursed to conviction by developing cultural relations. L/I/1/70.
9 In tel. 1075 of 15 January. *Ibid.*
10 In a letter of 23 December 1943, Mr Sorensen asked Mr Amery whether it would be possible to arrange an air passage for him to India so that he could 'see as much as I can on the spot and also . . . interview personalities of importance.' In his reply of 29 December Mr Amery regretted he could hold out no hope of an air passage. L/PO/6/102c.

326

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 281

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *12 January 1944, 11.55 pm*
Received: 13 January, 5 am

No. 99–S. We are committed by undertaking given in Council of State at last (? meeting) of Legislature[1] to enquire into Bengal famine by body "of type of a royal commission". This undertaking will certainly (? be) brought up at next session of Legislature and we must be clear about course we are (? to take).

2. I mentioned matter in Council on seventh making oral statement on following lines. *First*. To be of real value enquiry would have to cover wide field but terms of reference should not be such as to invite criticism of Constitution or recriminations. (? They) should be concerned with future rather than with past. Tentative draft as in succeeding telegram. *Second*. Enquiring body should be small consisting perhaps of (? chairman) with wide administrative experience and of considerable eminence and of senior serving member of Indian Civil Service agricultural expert nutrition expert and business man as members. In view of political implications of enquiry impartial chairman would almost certainly have to be obtained from United Kingdom. *Third*. Enquiring body would apparently have to be constituted by act of Central Government (? so) as to have necessary authority and powers. Ordinance would be preferable to Act of Legislature. *Fourth*. As regards date it is urgently necessary to ascertain causes of breakdown of 1943 and means of preventing recurrence. But Bengal is not yet out of the wood and officials will for many months be busy with emergency administration. Alternatives are to get enquiry started almost immediately say by end of March or to aim at more distant date such as November 1st next.

3. I asked Council for their opinion. Majority favoured enquiry as soon as possible and thought terms of reference and composition of committee to be on right lines. I undertook to ascertain your views and to sound you about chairman before formal action is initiat(? ed by) Food Department.

4. Council favoured Hailey as chairman if he could be persuaded to accept or failing him de Montmorency or someone of similar standing. Please telegraph your views and prospects of obtaining suitable chairman as soon as possible. I am advised that with emergency wartime powers enquiry initiated and directed by centre under central act will be constitutionally proper.

[1] See No. 238, para. 3.

327

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 282

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *12 January 1944, 11.55 pm*
Received: 13 January, 2.30 am

No. 100–S. My immediately preceding telegram. Bengal Famine Enquiry. Tentative draft terms of reference are as follows: *Begins*: To investigate and report to Governor-General in Council upon the causes of widespread distress, starvation and disease in Bengal in the year 1943 and to recommend best means preventing their recurrence with special reference to

(a) the possibility of improving the diet of the people and variety and yield of food crops.
(b) the possibility of increasing the efficiency of administrative system, particularly in districts, and
(c) the need for better provision for medical relief and public health. *Ends.*

328

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *13 January 1944, 6.55 pm*
Received: 13 January, 5.15 pm

No. 106–S. Your telegram No. 936[1] of 12th January. Bengal situation. I note War Cabinet's decision. You will doubtless realise that all the arguments advanced against my proposals were in my mind when I made them and that I was satisfied that public opinion Hindu and Muslim official and non-official would not have been such as to jeopardise success.

2. Please note bearing of War Cabinet's decision on my recommendation for imports. Now that we are to wait for some months before considering technical measures[2] in Bengal assurance of imports on scale recommended is even more necessary. Bengal is in many ways key to food problem throughout India.[3]

3. We will of course do everything possible to help Casey and if he presses Ministry hard we may get through safely.

[1] No. 322. [2] 'technical' deciphered as 'tactical'.

[3] In a note on L/PO/6/105g, Mr Butler (who was in charge of the India Office in Mr Amery's absence; see No. 355) minuted: 'The way the Viceroy links imports with Section 93 is rather sinister. R.A.B. 12/2.'

329

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/105g: f 45

PRIVATE *13 January 1944*

108–S. Your private telegram No. 48,[1] January 12th. I will certainly do all I can to help Casey and make Cabinet's policy a success. Cabinet has disregarded my advice (? in this case) and on Finance Membership. I trust I shall have more success with my recommendation for imports.

2. I see no need for Casey to see either Srivastava or Hutchings before he takes over in Bengal and have already advised him not to come to Delhi on arrival.

[1] No. 323.

330

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 82

PRIVATE *14 January 1944*

114–S. Your private telegram 33,[1] January 7th. I am sorry for decision since I think an Indian should be put in charge of Indian Finances. Since my recommendation was made officially for War Cabinet I presume I shall be receiving an official reply giving reasons for not accepting my recommendation.

[1] No. 307.

331

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: ff 78–9

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *17 January 1944, 1.40 pm*

1327. Your telegram 2832–S[1] of 25th December. Finance Membership. War Cabinet do not favour your proposal at this juncture. Factors influencing them in reaching this decision are the extremely difficult problems to be faced in financial field, the responsibility of H.M.G. of which, as recent debates on Bengal situation show, Parliament cannot absolve them for Indian administration under present constitutional arrangements which makes it impossible for

[1] No. 282; the date should be 24 December.

them to stand aside with risk of a dangerous financial situation developing; the fact that India's capacity as base for operations will largely depend on handling of financial situation; the fact that Indian Reserve Bank has newly appointed Indian Governor; and the fact that once an Indian had been appointed it would not be possible to go back. It was felt that appointment of a new European would be accepted by Indian opinion if a man of acknowledged & outstanding qualifications were chosen & it was decided that Chancellor & I should consider whether any such man were available or if not whether we would recommend extension of Raisman for further year.

332

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill[1]

L/PO/6/111: f 113

INDIA OFFICE, *18 January 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 1/44

Prime Minister

By Cabinet Conclusion W.M. (43) 139[2] of 29th September last regarding the meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers in London, I was invited to arrange for Indian representatives to return to the War Cabinet in advance of the date proposed for the Prime Ministers' Meeting. The Dominion Prime Ministers have undertaken to do their best to be here for a meeting in the first week of May and the Government of India propose to send representatives to the War Cabinet to arrive here early in April. Sir Firoz Khan Noon has been selected to represent the Government of India and it is proposed to announce this on the 21st January. A representative of the Princes will be selected later.

L. S. AMERY[3]

[1] A copy of this minute was sent to Viscount Cranborne and Sir E. Bridges.

[2] Apparently W.M. (43) 130th Conclusions of 22 September; i.e. No. 133.

[3] On 19 January, Mr Amery received notification that Mr Churchill had initialled this minute. L/PO/6/111.

333

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, LUCKNOW, *18 January 1944*

Your letter of 30th December[1] was delivered on 17th January. I am writing from Lucknow and hope to see Casey here this evening; but I shall not be able

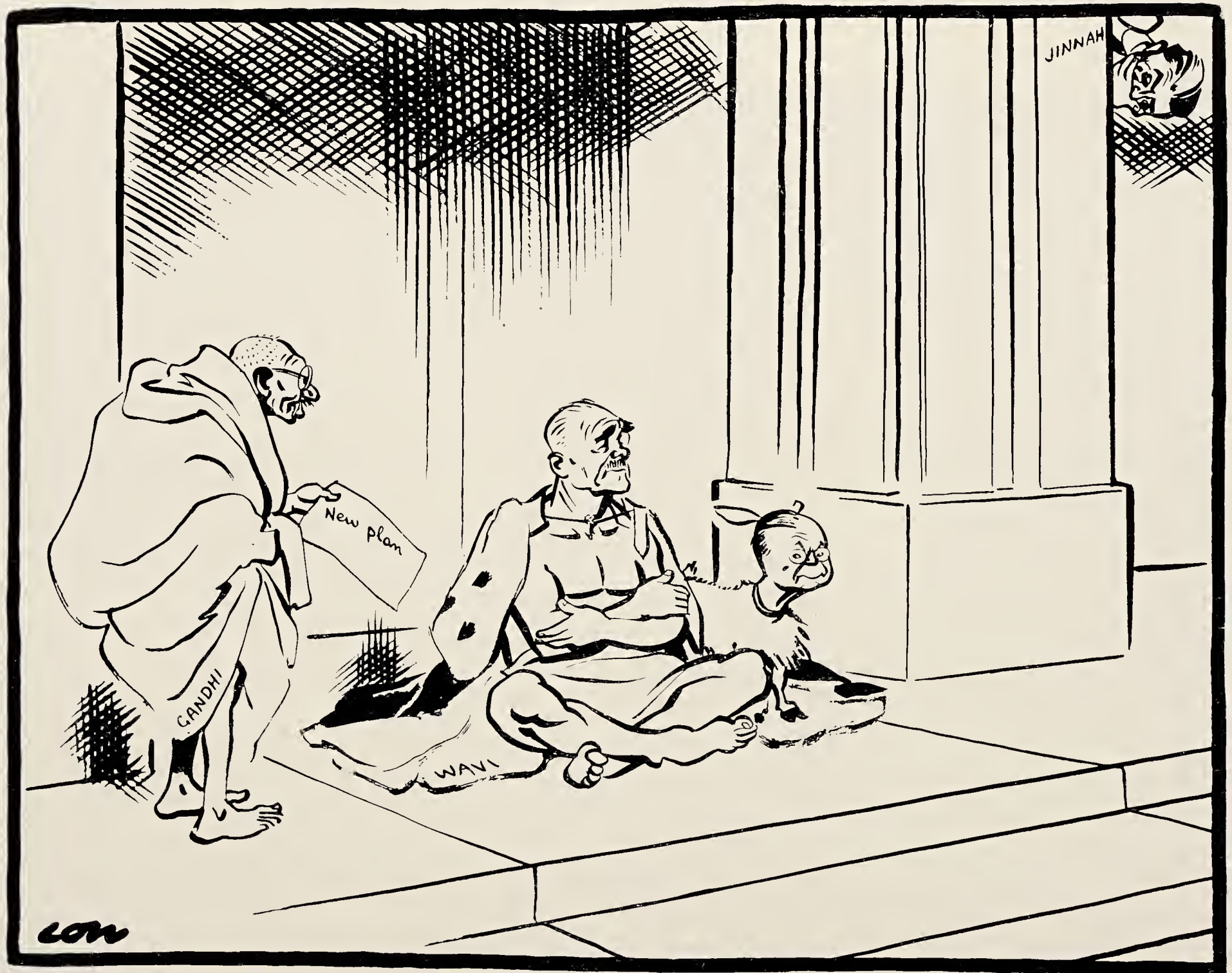
Field Marshal Wavell and Mr Amery, June 1943

Above: from The Statesman, *22 August 1943, where the caption read: 'A young mother, with a child clasped to her breast, weak from want of food, lies on the pavement of a Calcutta street, while a man, apparently on the verge of death, is in the background.' Cf. Document 90, para. 3 and Document 125*

Below: from The Statesman, *29 October 1943. Lord Wavell visiting the Rotary Club Free Kitchen, Calcutta. Left to right: Lady Wavell, Mr Jenkins (P.S.V.), Sir T. Rutherford, Lord Wavell, Mr J. K. Biswas (Chairman, Rotary Club Relief Committee). See Document 199, para. 4*

Governors' Conference, 19–20 November 1943

Front row, left to right: Sir B. Glancy, Sir T. Rutherford, Sir A. Hope, Lord Wavell, Lady Wavell, Sir J. Colville, Sir M. Hallett
Back row: Sir H. Dow, Sir A. Clow, Sir H. Twynam, Mr R. F. Mudie, Sir G. Cunningham, Sir H. Lewis



DAY OF SILENCE

From the Evening Standard, *13 July 1944. See Document 578, para. 8*

to give you any account of our meeting in this letter, which must go in the afternoon to catch the bag.

2. There are no special developments in Bengal. Srivastava finally decided, after consulting me, to give up his attempt to improve the Bengal Government's procurement plan. The main point at issue was that, while the Bengal Government proposed that their chief agents should do the buying for the deficit districts, the Food Department, with the very successful Madras procedure in mind, recommended that the deficit districts should be supplied on a trade to trade basis under strict supervision. The advantage claimed by the Food Department for their proposal was that if it were adopted the needs of the deficits would not be placed on the market as an addition to the Bengal Government's requirements; the buying would be done in small parcels by licensed dealers who would be directed to licensed dealers in the surplus districts. The Bengal Ministers contended that what had succeeded in Madras, where there is a highly organised Land Revenue staff, would fail in Bengal, and that if dealers were allowed to buy in the manner suggested, they would compete with one another and force prices up. They said that they would certainly use the trade in the deficit districts, but would insist on their obtaining their supplies from the stocks of the chief agents in the surplus districts. It was clear to me that either system could be worked, given the will to work it, and that it was not worth while arguing with the Bengal Government indefinitely. Since the Cabinet will not allow me to displace this ineffective body, the only alternative is to back up their schemes, unless they are demonstrably unsound. I therefore agreed with Srivastava that he should not press the matter. There is still a dispute between the Bengal Government and the rice millers, and this has not yet been settled. The Food Department have sent a representative to Calcutta to try to settle it. The main trouble is that the Bengal Government do not wish the millers to do any buying for them, while the millers, with whom the Food Department were at one time disposed to agree, suggested that they should be used as agents. The Food Department were not favourably impressed by a recent deputation from the millers, and the settlement will probably not give them the status of agents though it will provide for their capacity being filled under proper control.

The reports reaching me from Bengal are still very gloomy. I will try to send by this bag a copy of the report[2] of the Director of Military Intelligence for the week ending 8th January 1944. Hance, the D.G., I.M.S., has just returned from a tour in Bengal, and his opinion[3] on the state of medical relief is very far from encouraging—he thinks that the Governor should be made fully responsible for

[1] No. 290. [2] L/E/8/3312: ff 488–94.

[3] *Note by the Director-General, Indian Medical Service, on his Re-Inspection of Conditions in Bengal* dated 22 January 1944. L/E/8/4961: ff 241–4.

the administration of medical relief and public health. Cotter, the Public Health Commissioner, is also just back from Bengal. I have not yet seen his written report,[4] but I understand that he confirms other reports of official apathy in the districts. One Military Intelligence Officer—an Indian Christian from the Punjab—has written in scathing terms of the slackness and indifference of the civil officials with whom he came in contact during a recent tour. These reports all support my view on the use of Section 93.

You have doubtless seen Emeny's message to the *News Chronicle*,[5] which was much featured here in the morning papers of the 18th January. His views may possibly have been derived from Mr. Justice Braund, the Food Department's Regional Commissioner in Calcutta. This is only a guess, but Emeny had clearly had access to someone—probably an official—who knows a good deal about Bengal affairs and has been thinking a lot about food. I shall not be surprised if we get a bad press in the course of the next few days. It is assumed that we are too interested in constitutional propriety to take any decisive action and that you are ignorant of the real situation. Emeny's views, I may say, are not very different from my own.

3. I quite agree with your handling of the Finance Membership question (see paragraphs 2 and 3 of your letter of 30th December). I was surprised and considerably annoyed at the proposal[6] to appoint Donald Gordon. The Cabinet's lack of imagination in dealing with India is sometimes astonishing. They justify their refusal to appoint an Indian Finance Member by saying that their interest in the finances of India is so great that they must appoint an expert who will be absolutely safe. They then profess themselves unable to find a suitable man in the United Kingdom, and produce a youngish Canadian who has never been heard of here and whose name does not, so far as I know, appear in any book of reference. You will realise that it is impossible to defend this sort of thing, and your colleagues must stop trying to have everything both ways. If they really think it necessary in the interests of India to send an absolutely first-class Finance man with a reputation which will command attention, they must find one in the United Kingdom. If they simply wish to appoint someone who will take a Treasury view on India's financial interests, they will find a stout opponent in the present Viceroy.

4. I have decided on Mudie for the Home Membership though there will have to be an interregnum, during which Thorne can officiate. I shall doubtless hear from you about Mudie within a day or two. I do not think I could possibly have taken Hallett away from the United Provinces for this appointment. He has the heaviest, and in some ways the most important charge of all the Governors, and I am very glad to say that he is willing to stay on for a time if he is wanted when his term expires towards the end of this year. I agree that Cunningham is first class, but he is in his right place now, and should stay there.

5. Joyce's comments on the political situation are interesting. But it is easier to diagnose our complaints than to suggest a remedy for them. You must remember that in India political consciousness is confined to a comparatively small circle of people, nearly all of whom regard themselves as combatants in a struggle against the British and against the community to which they do not happen to belong. There is no real academic interest in constitution-making, and I cannot believe that an academic enquiry by University Professors, or by Liberals such as Sapru and Jayakar, would interest anyone or take us anywhere. The stage is still held by the old Congress leaders and by Jinnah, there are no highly organised political parties other than the Congress and the Muslim League, and the Congress leaders and Jinnah are not, in their present temper, likely to come together. I agree with you that if we could get some constructive work started, it would be a great step forward, but at present I can see no practical way of assembling a body of people to whom the press and the politically-minded public would pay the slightest attention.

6. I agree with Joyce's comments about the Cripps offer. There is no doubt, and Gandhi made this very plain at the time, that the offer was regarded as proceeding from weakness and not from confidence, and I suspect that Gandhi really believed at the time that we had lost the war. The point that in fact the offer was not connected with the course of the war is worth making, and I propose to make it in plain language in my address to the Legislature on 17th February, to which I refer again below.

7. I hope our demand for the import of foodgrains is being more favourably considered than you suggest in your letter of 30th December and in recent telegrams.[7] It is quite clear to anyone in India that planned imports of wheat on a very large scale are needed if we are to hold prices and avert famine. The results of the recent conference on the prices of *kharif* foodgrains illustrate this very clearly. The millets are now on the market, and we decided in Council on 15th January to introduce all-Indian maximum prices for them. But at the conference, whose recommendations we were considering, the Punjab and the

4 *Note by the Public Health Commissioner with the Government of India on Conditions in Bengal in January, 1944* dated 22 January 1944. *Ibid.*: ff 252–5.

5 A Reuter message dated London 17 January reported the *News Chronicle* special correspondent in New Delhi as having cabled that despite a record harvest Bengal was threatened with a second and worse famine. He considered that responsibility must be shared between the Bengal Government, Bengal politicians, the Government of India and the India Office; and he suggested that the existing Bengal Government should be dissolved and efficient administrative personnel drafted into the Province, and that Mr Casey on arrival should take over full administration.

6 In tel. 1–U of 14 January, Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell that Mr Gordon, Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada 1935–41 and currently Canadian Price Controller, was under consideration for the Finance membership. Lord Wavell replied, on the lines of this para., in his tel. 1–U of 15 January. L/PO/8/52b.

7 Nos. 292, 293 and 317.

United Provinces had opposed price-control on the ground that *rabi* prospects were still so uncertain that the prices of the millets might prove to be quite uncontrollable. In a country in which the entire food situation can be changed by a delay of a fortnight or three weeks in seasonal rainfall, price-fixing is a most difficult business, and unless there are substantial reserves in the hands of Government, and everyone knows that these reserves exist, and will be built up from month to month, control is clearly impossible. I say nothing of the social and administrative difficulties, with which you must be familiar.

[Para. 8, on ambulance aircraft to support troops in jungle country, omitted.]

9. The National Defence Council met on the 13th, 14th and 15th January. The discussion was again interesting, and there is no doubt about the Council's usefulness. As in all such bodies, some of the members are a little tiresome at times, but they are mostly people of standing and influence, and the discussions give a useful indication of public opinion, and some of the suggestions made in the course of them are valuable. The food problem was the one which aroused most debate, and the criticisms were all to the effect that the Central Government were too tender with the Provinces and should take stronger action. The debate showed that we should have had strong support for our Bengal proposals.

[Para. 10, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy's visit to the Middle East, omitted.]

11. The Bengal situation tends to overshadow other food matters, but some quite interesting things are happening. There is trouble in the North-West Frontier Province about *gur*. The local surplus was originally pitched too low and was allotted to the Punjab. The buyers appointed by the Punjab Government do not seem to have taken up their quotas, and the cane-growing districts of the North-West Frontier Province are glutted with *gur* which cannot apparently be sold or moved. Cunningham reports that his exasperated Pathans may protest violently, and he urges immediate de-control as a law and order matter. He thinks that the controlled prices are too high, and that all that is needed now is a control over movements until the glut is cleared. The Food Department story is rather different, their view being that the main trouble is lack of wagons to move the *gur*, and that there is no difficulty about prices. I hope that a departmental decision will be taken at a special conference tomorrow; there has obviously been a muddle of some kind which must be put right.

Travancore and Cochin are still in difficulties, and I have endeavoured to get them increased supplies of rice. I saw Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar on 16th January, and gathered from him that the problem is one not only of supplies but of movements.

Rationing is being fairly rapidly extended to the largest cities. Madras probably leads, but Bombay, the Central Provinces and the United Provinces are

also very active. Plans are in hand for the three largest Punjab cities, and I hope that Delhi will be rationed within the next two months or so. But I really must emphasise again that the whole of our food plans depend on the command by the Central Government of an adequate reserve, which can only be had by imports.

12. I am working on the first draft of my address to the Legislature on 17th February. I shall have to say something about the constitutional and political situation, and shall probably telegraph you the gist of this.

13. There is no change in the coal situation, but Young has got down to his job, and I hope that we may shortly see the cumulative effect of the various measures taken during the last few weeks. I have seen your telegram[8] about coal exports, and have asked to see the reply[9] in draft.

14. I am sorry that we have been so long in selecting our High Commissioner to serve in Australia.[10] The muddle here has been due to a difference of opinion between the Commerce, the External Affairs and the Indians Overseas Departments. As you know, the External Affairs Department is a Foreign Department, and does not handle our relations with other Empire countries. The Agent-General in South Africa is for special reasons under the Indians Overseas Department—nearly all his work concerns the grievances of Indians in South Africa. The High Commissioner in London, and of course all the Trade Commissioners, are under the Commerce Department. Azizul Haque is not anxious to contract his responsibilities, and Khare thinks that all High Commissioners should be under him. The External Affairs Department (a possible repository for Empire relations) think Commerce Department should remain in charge. Caroe is not at all anxious to take over Empire relations, and a compromise has been suggested under which the Australian High Commissioner here would normally deal with the Commerce Department but would present his letter of appointment to the External Affairs Department, who would also be in proper "contact" for certain general matters. I do not know if this will satisfy the Australians, but I can see no alternative at the moment. The muddle is not entirely at this end as the Australians did not suggest to us that MacKay would not leave until our reciprocal appointment had been made. There was some difficulty in arranging accommodation for MacKay, and I understood that he was waiting until this matter had been settled; it was settled some time ago. I am told that the Commerce Member will submit names for the Australian appointment to me very shortly, and I will do my best to see that there is no further delay. But you know perhaps better than I do how difficult

[8] 1254 of 15 January. L/E/8/3754. [9] 1598 of 11 February. *Ibid.*

[10] In tel. 983 of 13 January, Mr Amery repeated to Lord Wavell a personal message from Dr Evatt, expressing concern over the delay in appointing a High Commissioner for India in Australia. L/P&J/8/190: ff 116–17.

it is at present to find capable men of the required standing. We ring the changes on a collection of approximately the same people and there seem to be no young men coming on.

[Para. 15, on the case of a member of the I.C.S. convicted of culpable homicide, omitted.]

16. I am spending the 19th January at Gorakhpur which is, I believe, your birthplace; on the 20th I am to see the rationing system in Lucknow; and on the 21st we both visit Allahabad and Benares. We then go on to Bombay.

334

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *19 January 1944*
Received: 2 February

Winston returned yesterday morning, in very good form, but I think still pretty tired. I only hope he will not attempt to do too much during the next few weeks. We have had an extraordinarily mild winter so far and may easily have a really cold spell during February. He had a great reception from the House, whom he surprised by walking in unexpectedly. All the same, the political situation looks increasingly as if it would be impossible to keep the Coalition together once Germany has collapsed. Our friends of the Left Wing are so convinced that they can win a great number of seats at an election, even if that meant fighting Winston himself, and would prefer to come back a strong and critical opposition even if they could not win. The Labour Members of the Coalition Government would, I am sure, wish to keep it going, but would I think mostly go out if ordered by their Party.

2. I imagine Casey is with you today, but will only stay for a very few hours to know your mind before flying on to Calcutta. As you say[1] very truly, he has been given a very difficult start, coming on to the ground so late in the day. It would have no doubt been better to have got him out in November, but at that time I was still very much under the impression that Rutherford was doing well enough—and indeed Linlithgow had considered keeping him on for a year more[2] in order to tide over the crisis. It now remains to be seen whether by his personality and with a reasonable measure of good luck he can restore confidence in the administration and carry on with and through his Ministers, or whether he will have to make up his mind in the next few weeks to take action under Section 93.

3. I am truly sorry that in sending you off a telegram[3] about Gordon as a possible Finance Member, I never gave the reasons which both in Anderson's opinion and in mine made him a preferable candidate to anyone in this country.[4] One of the chief objections I had urged in Cabinet to sending someone from here was that Indian opinion, even in the Executive, would always suspect him of wishing to help forward the Treasury or Bank of England interest and point of view, however wholeheartedly he did in fact throw himself into the defence of India's interest, my complementary argument being that if Mudaliar came to an arrangement with the Treasury here over outstanding matters, he would be much more likely to convince his colleagues that it was a fair settlement. It was in consequence of this that we looked round and that Anderson heard very high praise indeed from Ministers who have been over in Washington and in Canada of Gordon as not only a first-class financier, but as having handled most successfully the whole price-control situation in Canada. While that is, of course, a very different proposition to controlling prices in India, it yet, through the wide dispersion of its population and in other ways, is less unlike the Indian problem than anything we have had to deal with here. I was therefore on the ground both of obvious impartiality and special experience, as well as of high standing, that we have been considering his name. We are still finding out more in detail about him and I hope that if we are really satisfied as to his quality and the Canadian Government were willing to release him, you will not feel the objections which you voiced on receipt of my first telegram.[5] Failing him, the alternatives seem to be Rowlands or a year's prolongation of Raisman. Rowlands would obviously be a useful addition to your Executive generally. The main objection to him would be that he is not the kind of financial expert whom the Cabinet said it wanted to have and used as an argument against having Mudaliar.

4. I have had a letter[6] from the Archbishop of Canterbury, a little exercised in mind, though not seriously, about the so-called Lottery Loan, about which your Metropolitan seems to have sent him a letter of high moral protest. I

1 No. 310, para. 2.

2 The suggestion that Sir T. Rutherford might continue as Governor for a year or more appears to have been made not by Lord Linlithgow but by Mr Amery in tel. 1107 of 12 October 1943. It was renewed in Mr Amery's tel. 1134 of 19 October to Lord Wavell; see No. 183, para. 3.

3 1–U of 14 January; see No. 333, note 6.

4 A suggestion that Mr Geoffrey Crowther, editor of *The Economist*, might be considered for the Finance Membership was made by Mr Brendan Bracken in a letter to Mr Amery of 28 January 1944. Mr Amery sent Sir J. Anderson a copy of the letter the same day. L/PO/8/52b.

5 Mr Amery had sent Lord Wavell a second tel., on the lines of this para., as 2–U of 17 January. In his 2–U to Mr Amery of 22 January, Lord Wavell reiterated his view that Mr Gordon was not a man of 'acknowledged and outstanding qualifications'. If it was not possible to find someone who was, he felt it best to extend Sir Raisman. But Lord Wavell still considered, 'right thing is to appoint Indian well underpinned by financial experts'. L/PO/8/52b and L/PO/10/32b.

6 L/F/7/826.

enclose a copy of my reply[7] to the Archbishop, who I think as a sensible man will not make trouble here.

5. You mention in your letter of January 8th[8] that you are still meditating how to get some constitutional enquiry started. You may remember that in a previous letter[9] I suggested the possibility of your inviting, as the nucleus of such an enquiry, constitutional experts from America, Russia, Switzerland and also probably from Australia and Canada. I am just wondering whether there might not be something in following up that idea, but in reverse. What I mean is sending a small Indian delegation to visit these countries in turn, study their constitutional working in relation to the problem of India and then report. The idea seems to me to have two *prima facie* advantages: the first is that the delegation would get a much more thorough and practical idea of how the different constitutions worked, by being able to cross-examine a large number of people in each country. They would have that knowledge permanently and be able to diffuse it afterwards through all their Indian contacts in a way that would not be open to a Russian or American constitutionalist. Secondly, for such a purpose you would obviously not be expected to select the leaders of the extreme parties, but might make it quite a small body of men who are primarily constitutionalists, such as e.g. Reddi of Andhra University. At the same time it might be possible to make a man like Rajagopalachari, who is no longer in active party politics, the head of the delegation. Sapru and Sastri are I expect both too old. But you might get a good Muslim jurist with Pakistan leanings whom Jinnah might not be too violent about. A further advantage would be that it could not be said that people from outside were coming to tell India what kind of constitution she is to have, but reputable Indians of varying points of view visiting other countries to report on the working of their constitutions for India's benefit. The idea has only just occurred to me and I put it to you for what it is worth. But at first blush it seems to have a good deal to commend it. The mere fact that the deputation will not be invited to frame a constitution for India, but only to collect information about other countries, would make its composition less directly invidious from the party point of view. It could hardly be said that a little body so appointed would be valueless unless it included the detained Congress members or were blessed by them, or for that matter by Jinnah. The deputation would no doubt take a year or so to get round and by the time it did one might hope that Switzerland would be accessible. If not, they could invite Swiss delegates to meet them in Lisbon. Meanwhile it would at any rate show that we are keeping the future constitution in mind and are not going back on the Cripps Offer. I hope what I said in that connection the other day at York[10] may have been helpful.

6. Another idea which has occurred to me, thinking of the matter from the point of view that really it is not the parties, but the Provinces and States who

would have to formulate the future constitution, is whether it might be possible at some stage to get together an informal Conference of Provincial premiers in the Provinces enjoying self-government, of representative men like Rajagopalachari from the other Provinces, and possibly of a few men nominated by the Chamber of Princes, not ostensibly at any rate to consider the constitution itself, but to consider the setting up of some constitutional enquiry. The understanding, in this case, as in that of the delegation suggested in the previous paragraph, would be that the Government of India would pay the necessary expenses. In either case, I think you might make good use of Rajagopalachari, who has administrative experience and has, as shown in his latest pamphlet,[11] come to a very broad and sane point of view on the whole problem.

7. Reading the Poetry Review the other day, which no doubt you get as a member of the Poetry Society, I notice that there is a flourishing Poetry Society in Hyderabad, which meets regularly, with papers read both on Indian and on English poetical subjects. It has occurred to me that the development of poetry societies in different parts of India might be an excellent, non-controversial and indeed welcome line of approach for the British Council to take up when it sends its ground scouts to investigate the Indian position, and I have mentioned the matter to Malcolm Robertson. The idea is one which I think will commend itself to you. Such societies might be valuable not only in promoting Anglo-Indian contacts, but in creating a contact of mutual interest between Hindu and Muslim. The same might also apply to the formation of philosophical societies and indeed have a big appeal to the Indian temperament.

[7] L/F/7/826. [8] No. 310. [9] No. 248, para. 5.

[10] Mr Amery dealt in his speech at York on 9 January with the failure of the Cripps Mission. A chief reason for this, he considered, was Mr Gandhi's and the Congress leaders' belief that the offer was made from a consciousness of weakness and impending defeat. There could, Mr Amery stated, be no more complete misunderstanding of our whole outlook and purpose. Victory would not afford the British Government an excuse for going back upon their pledged word. 'On the contrary it affords the only opportunity and for us the desired opportunity to give effect to our pledges, so far at any rate as it lies in our power to give effect to them.'

[11] Mr Amery is presumably referring to *The Way Out* (Oxford University Press, London, 1944) which had been published in India the previous November.

335

Mr Amery to Lord Leathers

L/E/8/3322: f 18

INDIA OFFICE, *20 January 1944*

My dear Leathers,
I agreed[1] to discuss with you in advance my new approach to the Cabinet for food supplies for India and I enclose herewith the draft of a paper[2] which I propose to put forward.

If you think that the matter would more usefully come up for discussion in some preliminary forum I would suggest that the Chancellor's Committee on Indian Financial Questions with yourself added would be the most suitable. This question of the importation of foodgrains has become increasingly a matter of measures necessary, in the view of the Viceroy and his Government, in order to prevent the breakdown of the whole economic structure of the country and its ability to function as a base for military operations, and those aspects are the concern of the Chancellor's C[ommit]tee. The Chiefs of Staff also are directly involved.

I think in this context you should see Wavell's telegram to me dated 12th January[3] of which I enclose a copy. Please let me know when you would like to discuss.

L. S. A[MERY]

[1] No. 309. [2] The paper as submitted to the War Cabinet is No. 347. [3] No. 321.

336

Mr Amery to Mr Bevin

L/E/8/2527: ff 4–6

INDIA OFFICE, *21 January 1944*

My dear Bevin,
I promised in my letter of 24th November[1] to send you further information about progress in regard to social and economic questions in India when I had a report of the discussions on these subjects which the Viceroy had with Provincial Governors in November. I have now had a report and you may like to see the enclosed copy of a note which has been drawn up summarising the present position.

I am sending a copy to Cripps and also to Anderson, Attlee, Woolton, Simon and Grigg.

Yours sincerely,
L. S. AMERY

Enclosure to No. 336

POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION IN INDIA

A Reconstruction Committee of the Governor-General's Executive Council was set up in March 1943 and its machinery has since been considerably elaborated. It works through a series of policy sub-committees, each dealing with a group of subjects. These policy sub-committees are partly official and partly non-official in composition. They are large and may prove rather unwieldy, but there has been attached to each of them an official sub-committee which will do the preparatory work. The field has been divided as follows:—

Committee No. 1	Re-settlement and re-employment of ex-soldiers.
Committee No. 2	Disposals, contracts and Government purchases.
Committee No. 3A	Transport
Committee No. 3B	Posts, telegraphs and air communications.
Committee No. 3C	Public works and electric power.
Committee No. 4	Trade and industry
Committee No. 5	Agriculture, forestry and fisheries.

In addition an official committee has been set up on social services.

2. It will be seen that the ramifications of the organisation are very wide. A good deal of useful preparatory work has been done, particularly as regards the re-settlement and re-employment of demobilised soldiers, including schemes for their technical training. Thought has also been given to electrical and road development, a committee under Sir J. Bhore has been set up regarding public health and an ambitious scheme for education has been drawn up by Mr. Sargent,[2] the Educational Commissioner in India, which is estimated to cost ultimately Rs. 280 crores per annum.

3. Lord Wavell took the opportunity of a Meeting of Provincial Governors at New Delhi in November to ascertain their views about post-war reconstruction in all its aspects. In a note[3] which he circulated as an agenda he emphasised that, although the critics of British administration in India are blind to the inevitable poverty of a land of smallholding farmers, ignore the great contribution which we have made to the betterment of Indian conditions and overlook the way in which the swelling of the population neutralises measures to raise the standard of living, nevertheless great scope exists for further improvement and a most

[1] No. 240. [2] See No. 198, note 4. [3] No. 198.

extensive programme is needed in the social and economic field. He drew attention to the impossibility of making men available for planning at present, owing to the demands of war problems on the exiguous administrative staff available in India and threw out the suggestion that experts should be obtained from outside India by the Central Government and made available to the Provinces. He gave an assurance that the Indian authorities would receive all possible help and sympathy from His Majesty's Government.

4. During the course of the discussion the following points particularly emerged:—

(a) There will be no difficulty in financing, either by Government loans or by private capital, electrical and industrial expansion, which Indians are determined to achieve. This in itself will increase the wealth of the country and thus be an important contribution to lifting the standard of living in India.

(b) As regards other aspects of development, the general view was in favour of devoting resources in the first instance to the problem of rural poverty, e.g. road construction, irrigation, agriculture, veterinary and co-operative services, rather than to health and education, and that health should come before education.

(c) The Viceroy stressed that a much bolder use of India's financial resources is needed and that neither the Centre nor the Provinces are at present going big enough or fast enough.

(d) Large schemes for development exist on paper, but no money is available for them in war time. When peace comes the Centre will have to give Provinces financial help and in return the Provinces are likely to have to submit to some degree of supervision.

(e) The crux of the matter is administrative resources. A great expansion of staff will be necessary and men would have to be obtained from outside India. A doubt was expressed how far the present Provincial Ministries could be trusted to spend efficiently the large sums involved.

5. It will thus be seen that the Viceroy is losing no time in exploring the possibility of a greater quickening of social and economic reform in India; but that this problem is bound up with that of the relations between the Centre and the Provinces and indeed with the future course of constitutional changes in India as a whole.

337

Mr Amery to Sir S. Cripps

L/E/8/2527: f 3

INDIA OFFICE, *21 January 1944*

My dear Cripps,
Some time ago Bevin asked me[1] to keep him informed of any developments about social and economic reconstruction in India and suggested that after a time it might be desirable to ask Wavell to give us a full statement of his views on these subjects. I do not think the time has arrived to ask for a full report, but I have received from the Viceroy a report of his conversations with the Governors at the recent Governors' Conference which covered these subjects and I have had a note prepared on the basis of these papers which I am sending to Bevin. I think you may also be interested to see a copy, which I enclose.

I am also sending copies to Anderson, Attlee, Woolton, Simon and Grigg.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 239.

338

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&S/13/981: ff 218–19

INDIA OFFICE, *21 January 1944*

My dear Archie,
In paragraph 9 of your letter of December 22nd[1] and paragraph 3 of your letter of December 29th[2] you mentioned the Jam Sahib's wish to bring representatives from the States for informal consultation with you. It is disquieting to learn that the Princes are becoming increasingly uneasy with regard to our policy and suspicious of our motives; and it seems inevitable that this attitude will be intensified both by the Judicial Commissioner's decision challenging the attachment scheme[3] and by the steps we shall take to restore the position in this regard. But we shall be better able to judge what we are up against when we have Wylie's report on his meeting with the standing Committee and the list of topics for discussion between you and Princely representatives which you are hoping to obtain from the Jam Sahib.

[1] No. 278. [2] No. 287. [3] See No. 264, note 2.

Meanwhile, you will have seen that I gave my general approval[4] to your proposals[5] as to the line your Advisers should take with the Standing Committee; and some general comments on the issues raised have since been sent to Wylie.[6] Very briefly, it seems clear that Linlithgow's policy of constant exhortation to the Princes to put their house in order did not achieve the success it deserved, mainly because it was obliged to conform to the rigid framework of our treaties and engagements, which together guarantee the perpetuation of a multiplicity of petty and uneconomic units. Both the Kathiawar attachment scheme and co-operative grouping—as it has been developed up till now—leave these separate sovereignties substantially intact; hence neither really touches the core of the problem. On the other hand, any fundamental change of policy such as would permit of a more radical solution, such for example as merger or fusion (even in isolated cases) imposed by Act of State, seems ruled out for the period of the war, and probably for some time afterwards, by the difficulty of claiming the attention of Ministers here for a problem which, while not of the first order of urgency, demands careful and detailed consideration. The conclusion seems to be that for the present we must do the best we can with such imperfect expedients as attachment and co-operative grouping, in the hope that the growing force of public opinion, the attraction exercised by the larger States, pressure by Political Officers, and such centripetal force as co-operative groups may acquire, may jointly or severally result in some progress towards genuine local federations, or the merger of smaller with larger units.

As regards the question on which you asked for my views in paragraph 3 of your letter of December 29th, I entirely agree that statements reaffirming our treaties and engagements with the States should be avoided so far as possible. This view was also shared by Linlithgow, vide paragraph 10 of his letter to me of September 13th last, No. 22/H.E.[7] At the same time we must recognise that the policy of H.M.G. in this regard has undergone no change; and recent experience, e.g. in connection with the Cripps Mission and the Kathiawar attachment scheme, shows that when it comes to the point it is difficult or impossible to avoid the public reaffirmation of our pledges—or at any rate the denial of any intention to repudiate them.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

[4] No. 284. [5] No. 264

[6] In a letter from Mr Patrick dated 7 January 1944. L/P&S/13/981. [7] No. 111.

339

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: ff 271–5

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *22 January 1944, 11.45 pm*

1840. Your 99–S.[1] Famine enquiry.

Reuter message, on which I am dependent for terms of your commitment in Council of State, referred to "enquiry to examine the whole question of food shortage in India and particularly in Bengal". You may have reason of which I am unaware for limiting the enquiry to Bengal, but I would suggest that the enquiry would gain substantially in positive value, especially from point of view of its bearing on reconstruction which it seems to be important to emphasise, if it were expressed as extending also to other provinces and the Centre, as these have been to a varying degree the subject of public criticism. Moreover if we wish to keep the political side of this business out of it as far as possible I doubt if limitation to Bengal is the best way to achieve this end. I do not think it could be maintained that enquiry with all-India scope would duplicate Gregory Committee since latter (a) was appointed before circumstances giving rise to present enquiry had developed and (b) had much narrower function of exploring food-grain production, distribution and price regulation. Otherwise I agree generally with your first.

2. I agree that enquiry should be as full as possible. There would be much to be said in favour of one man enquiry but I think an official and perhaps a business man of adequate calibre will be necessary to help the Chairman in the performance of his task. You have perhaps in mind some particular I.C.S. man, but if in view of heavy burden on limited cadre of serving officers you want me to explore possibility of a retired man I will gladly do so, though only names that occur to me at once are those of my three European ex-I.C.S. Advisers, Hubback, Wiles and Woodhead. For the business man you doubtless have in mind that someone should be chosen from European commercial community in India, possessing presumably recognised business qualifications of an outstanding order.

3. Somewhere in the composition of the enquiry (perhaps in its secretariat) adequate background knowledge of Bengal in particular will be necessary. Requisite knowledge of other Provinces (if enquiry has wider scope) might be left to be acquired in other ways.

4. I have some doubt whether the experts whose knowledge will be needed by the Commission in one form or another should be full members, and suggest

[1] No. 326.

they might function more usefully as assessors. You presumably expect to find nutritional and agricultural experts (the latter preferably someone without appreciable Provincial bias) from within India, and will let me know if you need help from here. There will also surely be need similarly for an expert element on the health side perhaps a medical as well as a public health man. (There is of course no inconsistency between the above and suggestion at end of para. 2 of my Personal telegram 25879[2] of 11th November, which envisaged investigation of quite different kind and much narrower scope.)

5. Your third I agree. The position would be open to even less doubt if terms of reference cover all provinces and Centre as well. Fourth I think there is much to be said for getting the enquiry, since there is to be one, launched without delay. Much must depend on availability of Chairman and members but subject to that I see much advantage in their work being well under way and their preliminary advice available at least to Government by the time we reach the danger period in August of this year. If however March should unfortunately prove impracticable I am not clear why it should then be necessary to wait till November for commencing.

6. On question of Chairman I have telegraphed invitation to Hailey who is in America and also asked his views on two or three alternatives in case as I fear he is unable to accept himself.

7. As regards terms I have already suggested that they might be widened to cover all India and Centre and I see some advantage in wording them as widely as possible e.g. "causes and effects of the food crisis in Bengal and elsewhere". I should like to see the Centre included in the enquiry and though I do not question relevance of your special references (a) to (c) I am rather doubtful whether these are not better left to the Commission itself to determine. Actual specification in the terms tends to exclude other points which may require attention such as the price factor. There may be others. There is much to be said in general for wide terms, and in this particular case benefit of enquiry might be diminished if it could be alleged that you had directed the commission where to look for causes, so as to divert their gaze from inconvenient directions.

8. Above comments are for your consideration. Major question seems to be that of personnel. Even with best chairman available I think it will be wise to keep numbers to minimum.

[2] No. 222.

340

Mr Gandhi to the Secretary, Government of Bombay (Home Department)[1]

L/P&J/8/623: ff 177–80

DETENTION CAMP, *24 January 1944*

Sir,

I have been served with a notice[2] showing the cause of my detention, and informing me that I have a right to make representation against the order. In the exercise of the right thus conferred upon me I beg to say as follows:

I admit that I took a leading part in the passage of the Congress resolution of 8th August 1942.[3] I must deny emphatically that the mass movement sanctioned by the Congress was "calculated to impede the successful prosecution of the war". Moreover I am in a position to show conclusively from my speeches at the Congress meeting and otherwise that there was no intention on my part, as the person in sole charge of the movement, to start it immediately and that, as publicly announced by me, I was to enter into correspondence with H.E. the Viceroy with a view to avoiding the contemplated movement. Had the correspondence proved abortive, being a firm and tried believer in non-violence I would have taken every precaution to keep the movement under restraint.

By their hasty and ill-conceived action in arresting me and leading Congressmen, the Government goaded the populace to acts which they would otherwise have never done and thus did disservice to the Allied cause. By their persistence in continuing the unfortunate policy of August 1942 the Government are increasing the existing bitterness between the Government and the people. And this I say in spite of the fact that they are able to procure recruits and money enough for the military.

I have little hope of getting a fair or impartial hearing for my representation. By their pamphlet *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances 1942–43*[4] Government have condemned unheard Congressmen and me. That pamphlet bristles with inaccuracies and reckless statements.

In view of the foregoing, I ask for an open investigation by an independent tribunal into the charges against the Congress, Congressmen and me and countercharges against the Government, or in the alternative the discharge of detained Congressmen and myself.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] This correspondence was sent to the India Office under cover of a letter from Sir R. Tottenham, No. II/2/44–M.S. of 21 February 1944. It is not included in *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) nor in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4).

[2] Annex 1. [3] Vol. II, No. 470. [4] Cmd. 6430.

Annex 1 to No. 340

The Secretary, Government of Bombay (Home Department) to Mr Gandhi. Undated

NOTICE UNDER SECTION 7 OF THE RESTRICTION AND DETENTION ORDINANCE 1944 (III OF 1944)[5]

In pursuance of section 7 of Ordinance No. III of 1944, you, MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI, are informed that the grounds for your detention were that you took a leading part in the passing of the Congress Resolution of August 8th, 1942, sanctioning a mass movement which was calculated to impede the successful prosecution of the war and there was reason to suppose that, if not detained, you would take an active part in directing the movement.
2. You are informed that you have a right to make a representation in writing against the order under which you are detained. If you wish to make such a representation, you should address it to the undersigned and forward it through the officer in charge of your place of detention as soon as possible.

Secretary to the Government of Bombay,
Home Department

Annex 2 to No. 340

The Secretary, Government of Bombay (Home Department) to Mr Gandhi. Undated

Government have considered your representation and have decided not to cancel the order under which you are detained. The order will, therefore, remain in force until July 15th, 1944, unless sooner revoked or unless Government decide to extend it under section 9[6] of Ordinance No. III.

[5] Ordinance III of 1944 was promulgated as a replacement for Defence Rule 26. Under Section 7, the authority making a detention order was required to inform the person affected of the grounds for his detention, in so far as this was consistent with the public interest, 'and such other particulars as are in the opinion of such authority sufficient to enable him to make if he wishes a representation against the order'. *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 15 January 1944.

[6] Section 9 empowered detaining authorities to extend for further periods of six months, the initial maximum period of six months detention provided in the Ordinance. *Ibid.*

341

Secretary of State to Government of India, External Affairs Department

Telegram, L/P&S/12/2636: ff 121–2

INDIA OFFICE, *25 January 1944, 7 am*

2000. Your express letter No. 875/S.[1] Status of Agent-General. I agree with your general argument. But it will still be desirable if I am to convince Cabinet

that you shall, as suggested in paragraph 2 (2) of my telegram of the 21 November,[2] let me have a draft of the confidential instructions on which Bajpai would work and which would define his field especially in relation to Ambassador and authority of H.M.G. I may have difficulty with Foreign Office and my colleagues if this essential question is left entirely to be worked out between Ambassador and Indian Minister and I think some attempt must be made to lay down at least some general rules of guidance. In any case Bajpai would require a directive and I should therefore be glad if the draft of your proposed instructions to Bajpai could be prepared and sent to me as soon as possible. This would of course indicate the field of action from which Indian Minister would be debarred under present constitution e.g. questions relating to Indian States and define the matters in which he would be able to act under the orders of the Government of India.

Meanwhile I am taking matter up with Foreign Office.

[1] No. 285. [2] Apparently No. 27086 of 25 November (No. 241).

342

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO 6/111: f 104

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *25 January 1944, 8.30 pm*

2091. Deputy Prime Minister announced today in House[1] that Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting would be held in London within the next few months but that for obvious reasons date could not be given. Regret I was not informed in advance or would have warned you earlier.

2. If you have to make any explanation or statement on India's position I suggest you take line that meeting is a meeting of United Kingdom & Dominion Prime Ministers & not a full imperial Conference, but that Indian Representatives at War Cabinet will be in London at the time & will be available for consultation on matters of special[2] interest to India.[3]

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 396, cols. 531–2.

[2] In tel. 2175 of 26 January to Lord Wavell, Mr Amery asked for the word 'special' to be deleted.

[3] At a meeting of the War Cabinet on 20 January 1944, the subject of the Dominion Prime Ministers' meeting had been discussed. The point was made that the meeting was not to be a full Imperial Conference and the Conclusions continue: 'Arrangements were being made separately for the Indian representatives of [? at] the War Cabinet to be available in London so that they could take part in any discussions on special subjects affecting India.' The remainder of the Conclusions do not relate to India. *W.M. (44) 9th Conclusions, Minute 4.* L/PO/6/111: f 105.

343

The Nawab of Chhatari to Sir A. Lothian[1]

L/P&S/13/1202: f 87

No. 4–C. HYDERABAD, *25 January 1944*

I am desired to acknowledge with thanks your kind letter No. 1588–C,[2] dated 26th July 1943.

2. His Exalted Highness' Government fully appreciates the consideration that until clearer indications are available as to what the future political structure of India is likely to be it would be difficult, perhaps even 'fruitless', to attempt to solve the issues raised in my letter No. 633–C.C.,[3] dated 20th December 1942. In raising them at this stage, His Exalted Highness' Government only desired to place on record its views and to invite the attention of His Excellency the Crown Representative to certain points of principle arising from the broad intentions, as declared, of His Majesty's Government.

3. His Exalted Highness' Government notes with much satisfaction the acknowledgment by His Excellency the Crown Representative that the discretion of His Majesty's Government to incorporate Berar in any new administrative entity which may arise from future constitutional changes is limited by the provision[s] of the Agreement of 1936 and of Section 47 of the Government of India Act, 1935. As regards the distinction drawn between cessions and leases, His Exalted Highness' Government desires to point out that the first time Berar was "leased" was by the Agreement of 1902[4] which was terminated by the subsequent Agreement of 1936.[5] The distinction between Berar and the Ceded Territories (including the Northern Circars) is nevertheless admitted, but, as will be seen from paragraph 4 of my letter above referred to, the grounds urged by His Exalted Highness' Government for stating its thesis that "the privilege of enjoying the cession or assignment goes hand in hand with the responsibility of fulfilling the obligations for military assistance" were general and based on political and moral considerations, as broad as they were vital. His Exalted Highness' Government does not, however, wish to enter at this stage of uncertainty as to the future into any detailed discussion of the position it has taken in the matter or the difficulty which His Excellency has found in accepting it. It relies for the present on the assurance communicated not only that its views have been brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government but also that they will receive further and most careful attention as soon as the way becomes clear for taking up these momentous questions from the stage where they were left by Sir Stafford Cripps.

[1] Enclosed in the letter No. 190–C of 9 February from Sir A. Lothian to Sir K. Fitze.

[2] This letter was evidently based upon No. 20. [3] Vol. III, No. 286.
[4] C. U. Aitchison, *A Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanads*, vol. IX (Calcutta, 1929), pp. 165–6.
[5] See No. 20, note 4.

344

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, BELGAUM, *25 January 1944*

Thank you for your letter of 6th January.[1] I am sorry you foresee such difficulties about importing foodgrains. The matter is vital and I am gravely disturbed at the Cabinet's inability to understand either its administrative urgency or its political importance. If I have to send a representation to the U.K. it would probably be Hutchings supported by Gregory. Srivastava would not state the case very well, and Azizul Haque would not state it at all—he is extraordinarily vague where facts are concerned. I am in earnest about this; and I suppose as a last resort the Government of India could appeal under the recent U.N.R.R.A. decision.[2]

You are right in thinking that the communal question enters into everything, but I am very doubtful about your suggestion for specialised education for Civil Servants. The future of the Services is so uncertain that any elaborate plan made now would probably come to nothing.

Jinnah is not going to sell out on a rising market. I agree that his extreme pronouncements on the Federal Court[3] and other matters need not be taken literally—they are part of his stock in trade for the time being, and until he feels that his influence has reached its peak he is unlikely to modify them.

2. Casey arrived at Lucknow as arranged on the afternoon of the 19th and I had a long talk with him that evening. He told me of the course of the Cabinet discussions about the use of Section 93 in Bengal. The political consequences of getting rid of the Ministry were evidently much exaggerated, and it seems to me (in spite of what you say in your letter of the 6th January) that the Cabinet must trust to the advice of the man on the spot who has the responsibility, rather than those whose knowledge is some years old. The ordinary man and woman in India are now very seriously concerned about food, and, whatever

[1] No. 305.
[2] Lord Wavell is presumably thinking of the recommendation agreed by the U.S. House of Representatives on 25 January that India and any other area important to the military operations of the United Nations should receive help from U.N.R.R.A. L/E/8/3266.
[3] See No. 278, note 8 for *Dawn*'s attitude to the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Federal Court.

the politicians may say, would welcome decisive action. Casey is under no illusions about the difficulties ahead, and I believe he will pull Bengal together, if anyone can, provided his health stands the exacting Bengal climate. I am trying to help him with staff. The Chief is letting me have five fairly senior military officers—four Colonels and a Lieut.-Colonel—and a dozen Majors and Captains, and the Provinces are being asked to find forty junior officers to help in the Bengal sub-divisions. What Casey will do about his senior officials, I do not know. If Stevens becomes Chief Secretary in place of Williams a good substitute for him will be needed and I know of none in Bengal. A good Major-General with administrative experience might do better and cause less friction than an I.C.S. officer from another Province—the Provinces have no good senior men to spare in any case. I shall probably hear from Casey shortly, and in the meantime I have asked the Chief if a senior military officer can be found.

3. The general food situation is unchanged. There is still a tendency for prices to harden in Bengal, but the latest reports are a little more hopeful. General rainfall is reported from the Punjab, and Delhi is said to have had ¾ inch, so that wheat prospects are probably better. I have not yet heard any details. Cochin, Travancore, and the Malabar district of Madras are still in difficulties, and H. N. Kunzru of the Servants of India Society has just put out a rather sensational account of conditions in these areas. He is a member of the Council of State, and we shall hear more from him during the next session, I expect. He is a tiresome little man sometimes, but sincere and earnest and I rather like him. I have had my eye on Cochin and Travancore for some time, and the Food Department are trying to improve their bulk supplies. I had a long talk with Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar in Delhi the other day about the position in Travancore and he did not think it too serious. Madras is doing pretty well, and the Malabar trouble is, I hope, temporary. The Central Government's decision about all-India prices for the millets seems to have been accepted by all the Provinces including the U.P. and the Punjab. On the whole Bengal is the only Province causing me immediate anxiety, *but I need imports very badly if food control is to succeed.* All people, British and Indian, concerned with food both in the U.P. and Bombay emphasised the need for imports and a central reserve—without any prompting from me.

4. My tour in the U.P. was interesting though possibly a little too crowded. On 19th January I flew to Gorakhpur and saw the Gurkha Recruiting Depôt and the Civil Labour Depôt—both in excellent order. I spent 20th January in Lucknow, with some military engagements in the morning, and an inspection of the city's rationing system in the evening. On 21st my wife and I flew to Benares and Allahabad and I gave many interviews at both places. We returned to Lucknow the same evening and flew to Bombay on the 22nd.

Hallett has the United Provinces very well in hand. He is liked and admired by his officers, whose obvious keenness and efficiency impressed me very much. Crime is well down; the Police are on their toes; and the Police officers I met seemed well on top of their work—I inspected several Guards of Honour found by the Military Police, the Special Armed Constabulary, and the ordinary Police, and they were very well turned out. The Lucknow rationing system is an attempt, initiated by Mudie and Ibbotson under Hallett's general guidance, to adapt orthodox western principles to the conditions of up-country Indian towns. The U.P. Government have bought and hold stocks sufficient to feed their major towns for five months or so. Government foodgrains are distributed through depôts to controlled retailers, who are not permitted to undertake any other business. These controlled retailers cannot serve the entire urban population and uncontrolled shops exist alongside of them. But anyone can apply to be registered with a controlled retailer, and, if the application is accepted, the applicant is given a regular ration card which he uses in the same way as a ration card in the U.K. The scheme now extends to 37 "regulated towns", and Hallett says that from 60 to 70 per cent. of the population of these towns is rationed on cards. The uncontrolled shops receive only such supplies as the U.P. Government may allow—movements of foodgrains by rail into "regulated towns" can be made only under permit—but there is no restriction on cart traffic from the neighbouring villages. It is an odd system, but it works, and its sponsors claim for it the advantage that it does not interfere with the normal traffic between the towns and the neighbouring villages, on the maintenance of which the confidence of the villagers largely depends. Kirby has given it his blessing. Besides foodgrains, kerosene and fuel are rationed, in much the same way. Standard cloth is not rationed, and is selling fairly well at controlled prices. As usual with "austerity" measures in this country, there are complaints that what is supplied is not what is wanted (e.g. that the widths are those fashionable in Bombay but not in the U.P. and so on) and though some adjustments may be possible I doubt if all such complaints can be overcome.

The Rationing offices in Lucknow are methodically run and inspire confidence. The whole Civil Supplies organisation in the U.P. shows how much easier these administrative developments are in a Section 93 than in a Ministerial Province.

5. We had a very strenuous three days in Bombay. My wife saw several hospitals, canteens, schools and so on; and I had the usual interviews, and did a round both of the City and of the Port. We both visited a slum area, without any previous warning. During my drive round the City I saw eighty Bevin Boys about to embark. They were in very good heart. I also saw something of the rationing system, and was impressed by its efficiency. Bombay is proud of its handling of the food problem, and rightly so. Much of the credit goes to

Knight, one of the Governor's Advisers, who thought a long way ahead, and to Gorwala the Secretary in the Department concerned. But an efficient Municipality, and the complete control over imports exercisable in Bombay (no problem of cart traffic here as in the U.P.) have been important factors. There is no doubt that the distribution problem has been mastered in Bombay City and Suburban District, but the supply problem for the Province as a whole remains, and my non-official visitors rightly stressed the vital need for imports.

6. A considerable stir has been caused by the Rs. 10,000 Crore Economic Plan for India[4] produced by Purshottamdas Thakurdas, J. R. D. Tata, G. D. Birla, and others. I will try to include a copy in this bag, but will not comment at present as I have only read and not studied the document.

UDAIPUR, *28 January*

7. From Bombay I flew to Belgaum, where I saw a village and some of the local offices, and a depôt of the Forestry Department. On the following day (26th) I drove about 200 miles through the Bijapur and Sholapur districts. In the Bijapur district I was shown some remarkable work on Dry Farming. The best methods of farming in undulating country where rainfall is capricious have been under examination for many years, and the experts advise the construction of low *bunds* along the contours, ploughing across and not down the slopes, and the use of special seed and green manure. The famine of last year in Bijapur made it possible for the Bombay Government to convert individual effort into a mass movement which included not only the application of the approved "Dry Farming" methods, but the training and control of *nalas* and tree-planting. The principles of the contour bunding work are taught at a small school at Bijapur, so that when the urge created by the famine and the availability of famine labour ceases there may be a body of educated villagers who really understand what it is all about. Some Viceroy's Commissioned officers from the Army are to be put through the School.

The villagers generally seemed in good spirits and the civil officials were keen and confident. The famine was obviously well-managed, and great efforts were made to save cattle as well as people. I saw a cattle farm run by a non-official body which promises well.

8. My wife went to Poona from Bombay, and the party reassembled at Poona on the 27th January for the return to Delhi via Udaipur. It has been a useful and interesting tour. The official attitude in the Services may be summarised as: "everything will go on quietly and well in India so long as you don't let Gandhi or the Working Committee out"—quite true, I think, but not a farsighted policy.

[Para. 9, on the alleged failure of British women in India to help the troops; para. 10, on Sir H. Lewis' leave arrangements; and para. 11, on the Viceroy's tour plans, omitted.]

4 A copy of *A Brief Memorandum Outlining a Plan of Economic Development for India* by Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas, J. R. D. Tata, G. D. Birla, Sir Ardeshir Dalal, Sir Shri Ram, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, A. D. Shroff and John Matthai is on L/E/8/2637.

345

Mr Casey to Lord Wavell[1]

L/E/8/3340: ff 176–7

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *26 January 1944*

My dear Lord Wavell,
After only a very few days in Bengal, I think I should write privately to let you know that one of my first impressions is with regard to the surprising degree of latitude that has been given to the Press and to public speakers in their efforts to undermine public confidence and to create a feeling of insecurity particularly in respect of Food Policy.

2. The *Aman* procurement scheme has apparently been made a major political issue by the political opposition to the present Bengal Government—and they appear to have deliberately adopted a line of propaganda designed to set the minds of the cultivators against the Government's efforts to build up rice reserves.

3. This has been reflected to New Delhi in recent confidential reports of the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal. I have looked through these reports and the files of press cuttings of recent months—and I must admit to some alarm at the freedom of malevolent expression that has been allowed, which must already have caused a great deal of damage.

4. I find that my Ministers are alive to this danger, and local officials have already been told that speeches in connection with "Independence Day"[2] celebrations (aimed at frustrating Government's programme for the procurement of the *aman* paddy crop) are to be treated as "Prejudicial acts" under the Defence of India Rules and prosecutions are to be instituted for them. At the same time, local officials have been warned of the propaganda campaign in which Government's intention is represented as being deliberately to starve the people by

1 Enclosed in the letter of 3 February 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.
2 Since 1930 Congress had celebrated its aim of Purna Swaraj (complete independence) on 26 January.

acquiring the whole crop for the Army and, upon any indication of a Japanese invasion, to destroy or remove it. Local officers have been told to pursue propaganda of this kind with a view to prosecution and securing convictions in suitable cases.

5. The Chief Minister tells me that he proposes to hold a Press conference on January 27th at which Government's determination not to tolerate agitation or press articles which are likely to prejudice the success of the *aman* procurement scheme will be explained; and this will serve as a warning against objectionable speeches or press articles in future.

6. I do not as yet know how far my Ministry will go in measures to stamp out this kind of speechifying and press publicity. I am told that resort to the courts is very often unsatisfactory owing to the labour of preparing cases and delays in their disposal and to the uncertainty of judicial decisions and the chances of appeal; and it seems to me that this is a situation in which prompt and decisive executive action is called for.

7. I have consulted my officers on the subject, and I am told that we could use Defence Rule 56[3] to prohibit (or to lay down conditions for) meetings and that we could prosecute violations, but this means taking cases to the Court, with uncertain results.

Again, I am told that Ordinance III of 1944[4] is sufficiently wide to justify its use (particularly its section 3) to restrain speakers or to detain them.

8. As regards the press, I am told that action under the Indian Press (Emergency Powers) Act is likely to be unsatisfactory because executive action (whether it is a demand for the deposit of security or an order for the forfeiture of security) is subject to an application to the High Court, which, on past performance and in its present temper, my officers do not seem to think can be confidently relied upon to endorse the executive point of view.

I am also told that we would be justified in using Defence Rule 40,[5] both to forfeit papers in which undesirable articles have appeared and to prohibit their further publication.

And finally, I believe that we could use Defence Rule 41[6] to require any article dealing with the food situation to be submitted for prior scrutiny before publication.

9. I do not pretend to have yet thought all this out—but I thought I should let you know that my first impact with the problems here leads me to believe that we should not tolerate the continuance of the present state of affairs—in which the Government is struggling to implement its food policy—and the opposition is using every artifice of publicity and argument to undermine confidence in that policy.

10. My present intention is to put these views to my Chief Minister and take his advice. If he is not prepared to do all that is necessary, I will consider whether I ought not to make it a matter of individual judgment and to insist upon the prompt and firm adoption of progressively more rigorous measures in order to "stop the rot". I should, however, be grateful if you would let me know whether this line of action commends itself to you and would give me the benefit of your advice in the matter.

11. I am seeing large numbers of people each day—and am absorbing information as fast as I can. I am going on a short tour by air (from January 30th to February 2nd) to Chittagong, Comilla and Dacca—and back to Midnapore.

I will not overburden this letter with other matters.

I am,
Yours sincerely,
R. G. CASEY

[3] Defence Rule 56 enabled the Central or Provincial Governments to 'prohibit, restrict or impose conditions upon, the holding of or taking part in public processions, meetings or assemblies.'

[4] See No. 340, note 5. Section 3 provided that any person might be prevented from entering a particular area, detained, or expelled from British India with a view, *inter alia*, 'to preventing him from acting in any manner prejudicial to the defence of British India, the public safety, the maintenance of public order' or 'His Majesty's relations with foreign powers or Indian States.' *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 15 January 1944.

[5] Defence Rule 40 empowered the Central and Provincial Governments, *inter alia*, to prohibit the publication, sale or distribution of documents or to declare that they were forfeit if in their opinion such documents contained any 'prejudicial report'.

[6] Defence Rule 41 required editors, publishers, or printers, when requested, to submit all matter, or any matter relating to particular subjects, for scrutiny before being published. It also empowered the Central or Provincial Governments to prohibit or regulate the publishing of any documents or class of documents.

346

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *27 January 1944*
Received: 5 February

I have had your letter of January 12th,[1] full of interesting matter, but not calling in the main for immediate replies.

2. I am seeing Leathers this afternoon to try and make him realise the seriousness of the food position and to enlist his sympathy when the matter comes up

[1] No. 324.

to the Cabinet next week. But I continue anxious, for with the immense preparations for the second front Winston will be very impatient of anything that means the diversion of shipping.

3. Incidentally, he has been returning to the charge and talking about reducing the Indian Army by 25 per cent. Obviously, reduction, if not carried to the point of disorganisation or psychological defeatism, would have some effect in easing the inflationary situation and also counteract the effect in the opposite direction of those increases in pay—very modest in my opinion—which, after many months of consideration, your Government have at last recommended.

4. I have not had a chance of any further discussion with Anderson about the Finance Membership, but must see him in the next few days. The difficulty of getting any really first-class man from here will be aggravated by Montagu Norman's illness, which looks like ending fatally, or at any rate leaving him out of action for a long while to come. I need not say how entirely I agree with you in regretting the Cabinet's attitude about Mudaliar. There is indeed this much to be said for prolonging Raisman: that it may leave the situation open a year hence if, as is not impossible, there might be a change of Government in the interval. On the other hand what you say of Rowlands does make one feel that he would be valuable fresh blood in your Council.

5. My own immediate trouble is going to be the employment of women in the mines. There is to be a debate on the subject next week and I must make the best case I can. What is very difficult for Members of Parliament here to understand is that unless you consider that the safety and welfare of India are directly involved, it is not your business to override the views of your Council. I have sometimes wondered whether the real solution of the Indian problem might not be to declare India a Dominion in every respect under her present constitution and then see what happens! This is indeed what that wild man Arthur Moore, late of the *Statesman*, has always urged.

6. I certainly like your idea of sending a picked delegation of Indian industrialists to visit this country, and the United States too for that matter. They might very possibly not only see their way to big orders for plant which would relieve the sterling balance situation, but also come to co-operative arrangements with British firms for joint co-operative development of Indian industries. I believe Misra[2] while he was here did something on those lines.

7. The discussions of the Cabinet India Finance Committee amble on, and, except for the impossible Cherwell, members of the Committee are beginning to realise the main essentials of the position, which are:—

(*i*) that it is not a question of a debt, but of assets which India already holds and of arrangements of their orderly use after the war;

(*ii*) that the Defence Agreement is only a very minor part of the Indian sterling balances problem and still smaller part of the problem of our total outstanding balances;
(*iii*) that the matter can only be discussed after the war and by mutual agreement and not simply dictated from here.

8. There is one aspect of the Defence Agreement which I think will require to be cleared up some day. When it was made, the use of Indian troops outside India was envisaged in relation to operations so far from the Indian frontier as not to be directly attributable to India's defence. That can hardly be said about operations on the Burma frontier and it will obviously be ridiculous that whenever an Indian unit crosses that frontier it should then come off the Indian pay roll not only in respect of its immediate cost, but even of its antecedent raising and training. I should have thought that there was a very good case for saying that so long as there is a formidable Japanese force in Burma threatening India, the expulsion of that force is a direct part of India's defence. Once the Japanese have been expelled from Burma and the war has moved further east, then there is no doubt a good case for saying that Indian troops left to garrison Burma are no longer directly defending India, but should come under the Defence Agreement definition of troops outside India.

9. There is, of course, an aspect of the sterling balances question that will want consideration at the end of the war. All the equipment of the *British* forces in India belongs still to His Majesty's Government. On the other hand, India will want after the war, whatever the constitutional position, to start off with adequate modern provision for its defence and the sterling balances will afford an opportunity for India to acquire a completely new outfit for her army, air force and navy, *plus* reserves, by simply paying out of her redundant balances.

[Para. 10, on the Burmese Government in exile; and para. 11, on customs arrangements at Karachi, omitted.]

12. The Foreign Office have repeated to you their telegram No. 21[3] of 13th January to Chungking in which they asked our Ambassador to mention to the Generalissimo the recent journey across India and to ask that on any future occasions of this kind you should be informed in advance of the itinerary and times of arrival. In the circumstances of the recent case it seemed difficult to make any strong representations and Eden and I felt that this was as far as we could go and will certainly strengthen our position if the Chiangs do this again and any unpleasant incident results.

[2] The identity of this person has not been established. The reference may be to Sir B. N. Mitra, Indian High Commissioner in the U.K., 1931–6.
[3] L/P&S/12/783.

I notice that when the Generalissimo inspected the troops at Ramgarh, Mountbatten was with him. I suggest that, if you have not done it already, it might be worth bringing this matter of unnotified arrivals to the notice of Mountbatten or his staff. You could tell him that Seymour is asking the Generalissimo to notify you of any future visits, but as you cannot feel any great confidence that he will in fact do so, you would be glad if Mountbatten would warn you if they should hear of any intention of the Generalissimo's or Madame Chiang Kai-shek's of passing through or visiting India. It seems possible that if such a journey were contemplated they might hear about it before anyone else and if it occurred with Mountbatten's knowledge and without your having heard, the consequences might again be embarrassing.

It was only through Mountbatten that I heard anything at all of the original journey!

W.

347

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 63

L/E/8/3322: ff 15–17

INDIA

SHIPMENT OF FOOD GRAINS TO INDIA

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *28 January 1944*

When the question of importing food grains into India was discussed in the autumn[1] it was decided that the question should be reviewed again in the light of the Indian harvests. In November[2] the Cabinet agreed to continue shipping supplies for the first two months of 1944 to give the necessary time to make available the facts for this review. Since mid-October 130,000 tons of barley have been shipped from Iraq and 80,000 tons of wheat from Australia. 10,000 tons of wheat are being shipped from Canada and another 100,000 from Australia in January and February.

Estimates of the 1943–44 crops are set out in Appendix I. They indicate a promise of improvement over last year in the rice crop of 3–3½ million acres and an improvement of round about 2 million tons in yield. In Bengal alone the improvement may be even higher in proportion. As against this, lack of rain in the Punjab is threatening a partial failure of the wheat crop in the spring with unfortunate reactions on defence supplies, on urban rationing, especially in Calcutta, and worst of all on the co-operation of the Punjab Government and

people in the Centre's efforts to secure an all-India food policy both in relation to supplies and prices.

The present position, in relation to which these crop prospects have to be considered, may be summarised thus:—

Bengal.

In Bengal the harvesting of the new crop marks, for the time being at any rate, the end of actual shortage there. But famine is being followed by epidemic disease in the form of cholera and malaria, and the process of rehabilitation is obviously going to prove troublesome. Administrative and political weaknesses, brought to light by the famine and partly masked for the moment by military aid, have led the Viceroy to propose[3] very drastic remedies which the War Cabinet have not been able to accept[4] and the result overall is that the confidence of the people is badly shaken, the Viceroy has grave doubts of the possibility of coping with the administrative problems arising through the normal constitutional machinery, and the new Governor enters on a field where the recurrence of troubles comparable with those of last autumn forms a continuous threat. In the effort to secure the necessary restoration of confidence the Viceroy has accepted responsibility for 1944 for feeding Calcutta from sources outside Bengal. This involves a new charge of some 650,000 tons, half wheat and half rice, on the rest of India.

The Rest of India.

Meanwhile the rest of India has succeeded, notwithstanding the drain of relief supplies for Bengal, in holding its own against the threats of shortage which overhung Madras, Bombay and the Malabar States a year ago. Administrative machinery, including a growing measure of urban rationing, is working successfully in all three though Travancore and Cochin are causing some anxiety still. Price control and rationing in the surplus provinces, especially the Punjab, have only been achieved with much difficulty and their maintenance in adverse conditions is precarious. It is, in my view, a great achievement on Lord Wavell's part to have secured the Punjab's acquiescence in an all-India food policy. He has also had to take strenuous measures with the Sind Ministry.

Defence.

There is no need to elaborate the essential need, for defence and operational reasons, of an orderly and sufficiently fed population in India, more especially in the Eastern provinces including Bengal. Co-operation on friendly terms with the Moslem Governments of the North-West is equally essential, but apart from these political aspects of food, defence needs are raising a supply problem of serious dimensions. Defence requirements for 1943 were put at about 650,000

[1] No. 139. [2] No. 219. [3] No. 301. [4] No. 320.

tons of grain, largely wheat. In 1944 military needs have risen to round about one million tons, of which little more than half can be regarded as transfers from civil to military. On the basis, incontestable from the economic standpoint, that India should be relieved of *new* defence demands, about 480 thousand tons of foodgrains for defence have to be included in India's import demand.

Economic stability and operational needs.

India is seeking to close an inflationary gap of Rs. 250 crores a year, and among the many measures taken or proposed to this end, the import of consumer goods, with food as the most obvious consumption need of an undeveloped people, remains the quickest acting of all remedies. The importance of India's economic stability to her use as a base of operations and of supply has been sufficiently elaborated elsewhere. The Viceroy has not ceased to stress the importance of the food problem to maintaining that stability.

Amounts asked for.

With this situation in view the Viceroy has pressed upon me the view that, notwithstanding the good rice crop now harvested, the demand of the Gregory food grains committee for imports and the importance persistently attached to such an import programme, both by himself and his predecessor, must be maintained. That demand is made up of 1,000,000 tons per annum for current consumption and an additional 500,000 tons this year for the formation of a reserve in the hands of the Centre.

Current consumption requirements.

As regards the necessity for maintaining imports for current consumption it is pointed out, both by the Gregory Committee and by the Viceroy and his Government, that prior to the loss of Burma, India imported food grains (rice mainly) to an average net amount of over 1,000,000 tons per year. India's consumption is not calculable with any degree of accuracy but, subject to a carry over of unknown dimensions varying with the crop, the consumption of the people and more especially of the rural producing element was adjusted to the crop; so that for the non-producing element of the population the amount available varied little, consisting of a more or less constant marketed portion of the crop, plus imports and an unknown element of carry over. The experience of the past year has convinced the authorities in India that the loss of imports since 1942 has meant the consumption of the carry over and now, reserves having been consumed, is a major cause of shortage and that, though the exhaustion of a concealed reserve has not been evident till now, its results will persist, and may at any moment create a critical situation, so long as imports are not replaced. The effect of such a deficiency on confidence and so on prices is far in excess of its apparent magnitude, and it has also to be coupled with the new

calls for Calcutta and for defence to which reference has been made above. Nor can this deficiency be replaced by increased internal production, for Lord Wavell points out that fully a third of the population is underfed and will absorb such crop increases even before they reach the market. The great mass of the Indian population has at the best lived on a scale which makes our ideas of "austerity" look luxurious, and there is no scope for belt-tightening. *All this is quite apart from the yearly increase of 5 million in the population,*[5] *which has now gone on long enough to ensure that vast numbers of additional adult mouths are coming into full consumption every year. Since the war began the increase in the Indian population is equivalent to about half the total population of these islands.*

Reserve.

In addition to 1 million tons for current consumption the Viceroy asks for half-a-million tons of wheat this year for reserve. The need for this is largely a matter of price control. The Central Government needs to be able to hold off the market if it is to keep down the price of grain from the surplus provinces and for this purpose it must be able to supply deficiencies elsewhere when they occur. Requirements for this purpose can only be a matter of estimate and the Government of India do not feel that this part of their task can be achieved with less than the half million tons asked for.

Relations between price control and grain imports.

It is worth noting that the Government of India have, within the last few days, held a conference with Provincial representatives on control of winter grain prices, as a result of which it has been agreed to impose immediately an all-India maximum price for millets, an all-India price for rice being postponed pending the success of efforts now being made to bring down prices in the provinces where they are excessive. This is a long step forward on the hard road to an all-India food policy, on which the Government of India are to be congratulated, but the intimation of it is accompanied and conditioned by a unanimous emphasis, on the part of the Viceroy and his Council, on the pressing need of a wheat reserve only obtainable through imports, without which a poor wheat harvest will raise the price of wheat and so put upward pressure on the price of other grains beyond the capacity of the provinces to withstand.

A definite undertaking.

In peace time the effective check on the effort to raise prices was the limitless reserve of rice in Burma. India, having lost this, needs to be able to point the would-be profiteer to a firm promise of regular imports which can be used to keep prices in check. For this reason the Viceroy attaches almost as much

[5] [Note in original:] 5 million adults consume nearly a million tons of grain a year.

importance to regularity and certainty of supply as to amount; indeed, some hope is suggested that given a firm promise publicly announced and for a time publicly fulfilled, it might prove unnecessary to take up the full amount.

The request.

I am well aware of the difficulties involved. But in spite of them, and on the basis indicated above, I must press to the fullest extent the request that His Majesty's Government will authorise shipping for the quantities of wheat stated—a million tons this year for use and half a million for reserve, and for these quantities to be regularly supplied in accordance with a publicly announced undertaking. Lord Wavell has seen as much of the present food position as any man and has done as much to meet it and I quote his own words in support of this demand, telegraphed[6] to me in the last few days:—

> "*Throughout 1944 I shall have a hard struggle to hold prices and to stave off shortages and actual famine. I may not be able to prove this to the satisfaction of the War Cabinet, but the facts are quite evident here. Please tell your colleagues that they have been warned.*"

L. S. A.

[6] No. 321.

Appendix I to No. 347

Estimated Supplies and Requirements of the Principal Cereals in India during 1944

Supplies.

The Second Forecast of the Indian rice crop issued in December last estimated the area under rice at that date at 76,075,000 acres, compared with 71,519,000 acres in the previous December and an average of 69,661,000 acres for the corresponding forecasts of the three preceding years. The final forecast for 1942–43 was 74,919,000 acres with a yield of 24,533,000 tons. The average final forecast of the three preceding years was 73,313,000 acres with a yield of 24,412,000 tons. Despite the considerable increase in acreage which has taken place this season and the fact that the rice crop has escaped any of the natural disasters (cyclones, floods and pests) which so adversely affected the outturn last year, the Government of India are not prepared to put the yield of the current crop at more than 26,000,000 tons.

No forecast of the current season's wheat crop is yet available, but, owing to lack of rain in the Punjab, the yield is expected to be as much as 1 million tons below that of last year (10,971,000 tons). Forecasts of the other cereal crops are not issued.

The best estimates which the Government of India can make at present of the yields of the main cereal crops this season are as follows:—

	Tons 000.
Rice	26,000
Millets and Maize	12,200
Wheat	10,000
Gram	3,500
Barley...	2,100
Total, 1943–44	53,800

Compared with—

(*a*) 1942–43	53,928
(*b*) Average of five preceding years	51,792

Requirements.

The cereal requirements of India during 1944 are estimated by the Government of India on the basis of (*a*) the average production of the three years ending 1938–39 (53,495,000 tons) *plus* (*b*) the average annual imports of the three years ending 1939–40 (1,298,000 tons), making together 54,793,000 tons, *plus* Defence Services requirements. The all-over figure for the latter is put at 1 million tons, but 515,520 tons of this represents the normal consumption requirements of the Indian Army, so that the extra-normal Defence requirements occasioned by the increase in the Indian Army and the presence in India of non-Indian services personnel, and of labour employed on Defence works, amounts to 484,480 tons.[7] Thus, the net consumption requirements for all purposes can be stated as follows:—

	Tons 000.
Normal requirements	54,793
Extra requirements for Defence	484·5
Total requirements	55,277·5
Against estimates [estimated?] crops of ...	53,800
Leaving a net deficit of	1,477·5

7 [Note in original:]

This figure is made up as follows:—

	Tons.
(1) For non-Indian troops, including United States, Chinese, West and East African and British troops additional to pre-war strength	181,480
(2) Excess of military scale of rations over normal civil consumption of additional Indian Army personnel	180,000
(3) Similar excess for labour on Defence works	50,000
(4) Shortage of wheat products in Defence Services reserves, 1943, which has to be made good in 1944	73,000

Appendix II to No. 347

Extracts from Conclusions of Gregory Foodgrains Policy Committee, 1943

(Chapter 4, S.19.)

19. Our conclusions are:—

(i) India must cease, for the duration of the war, to be a net exporter of food: no exports should be permitted unless such exports are fully compensated by imports in addition to the imports mentioned in the succeeding paragraph. No exports of rice should be permitted at all. The Food Department must be completely satisfied that such compensatory arrangements are entirely adequate. In no other way will it be possible to stop the crop of rumours which have exercised a dangerous effect on the country.

(ii) As regards imports, the Government of India should (*a*) press for imports to create a Central Food Grains Reserve, which should not be less than 500,000 tons. Such a quantity is absolutely necessary to prevent a break-down of the machinery of the procurement, rationing and price policies outlined in subsequent chapters. It is not a substitute for but a complement to more vigorous administrative action in other fields. (*b*) press the United Nations to arrange for imports for current consumption until further notice, equal in amount per annum to the average annual net imports of the last five years or about one million tons. This request is strongly urged on two grounds:—

(i) The fact that the area most likely to be involved in military operations is also the area most hard-pressed as regards food supplies, and
(ii) that owing to the low *per capita* standards of consumption generally prevailing in India as a whole, the degree to which subsistence levels can be cut is considerably less than in more fortunately situated countries.

(*c*) investigate the impact on the food situation in India of the strategical plans now being elaborated, in so far as they concern the presence of large Overseas Forces in India.

(iii) Whatever arrangements or agreements are entered into should be most scrupulously observed, in order to minimise the dangers of misinterpretation and rumour-mongering.

348

Viscount Halifax to Mr Amery (Extract)[1]

L/P&S/12/2636: f 116

29 January 1944

I am very glad to hear that Wavell is in favour of giving Bajpai the status of Minister. Apart from the general advantage that would accrue, such action, as I have repeatedly urged, would lessen the validity of any allegation that he was merely a creature of this Embassy and of H.M.G.; and this would have, I would think, quite certain value here. Moreover, such a change would only formalise a situation which already exists largely in fact so far as direct access by Bajpai to the State Department is concerned.

From the constitutional point of view I should have thought that H.M.G. could very reasonably judge this matter in the same fashion that they judged the matter of Indian representation at the League of Nations. The fact that we choose to let India have independent representation in public does not seem to affect one way or the other the question of the internal relations between Great Britain and India, unless indeed the authority with which we wish India to be separately represented—in this case the U.S.—itself raises it.

There is the further case to be made on the ground of the development of all these things like international Food arrangements, U.N.R.R.A., and Lord knows what else may be coming along. All this throws a considerable volume of extra work on whoever represents India, and work one would think that was, from the Indian point of view, a good deal better done by someone with independent status.

There is, of course, the possibility that the U.S. Government might become formal over the suggestion and make difficulties, but I should be a little surprised if they did although at the present moment they do in a way get the best of both worlds from their point of view, being able to treat with the Agent-General as if he were an independent head of mission without having to make difficult decisions in the field of international law regarding his status and the status of the Government of India.

[1] Only this extract is on the India Office file. It was sent by Mr Turnbull to Mr Lawford at the Foreign Office on 7 February 1944. Mr Turnbull asked that Mr Eden should be shown the extract when considering an official letter of 27 January forwarding and supporting No. 285.

349

Chief Secretary, Government of Bombay, Home Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/622: f 39

IMPORTANT BOMBAY, *31 January 1944, 10.20 pm*
Received: 31 January, 8 pm

No. 31. Mrs Gandhi had a serious heart attack this morning and is in a bad way at the moment. Attack described as worst she has had.

350

The Maharaja of Patiala to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&S/13/974: ff 124–6

SECRET MOTIBAGH PALACE, PATIALA, *1 February 1944*

My dear Lord Wavell,

At the meetings of the Standing Committee of Princes held last month in Delhi, it was decided to approach Your Excellency, as the Crown Representative, with a view to allaying the grave concern of the States in general over the Scheme of Attachment announced in the communiqué of the 16th April, 1943.[2] As the matter is most urgent and His Highness the Chancellor is indisposed, I am desired to address this letter and to solicit Your Excellency's indulgence.

2. The Chancellor has already apprised[3] Your Excellency of the grave apprehension which is exercising the minds of the Rulers of Indian States that their rights and interests are being sacrificed and the clear provisions of their treaties and engagements are being subordinated to the exigencies of changing times without their free and express consent. These developments are particularly unfortunate as they come at a time when the Indian States have put in splendid War effort in which they are still engaged, and are fighting along with the United Nations for the sanctity of treaties and solemn undertakings.

3. The Indian Princes fully appreciate the necessity of raising the standards of administration where they fall short of the accepted criteria. They are, however, convinced, after most careful consideration, that the objective of raising the standard of administration, where needed, can and should be ensured by the Rulers themselves through suitable alternatives founded on consent, which do not impair the existing sovereign rights and privileges of the Rulers concerned or the integrity of their States or the continuance of the Ruling dynasties. The States, therefore, rely on Your Excellency and your Advisers to provide an

early opportunity to the representatives of the States and those of the Crown Department to find a satisfactory solution of this problem, as far as possible through negotiation and agreement. I need hardly assure Your Excellency that the good offices of the Standing Committee and the Chancellor will be entirely at Your Excellency's disposal to assist in this work.

4. At the formal meeting of the Standing Committee of Princes held on the 17th January, one of the items discussed was the policy regarding the raising of the standards of administrations in the smaller States. The memorandum[4] of the Crown Department on this item had reached the members of the Standing Committee about a week before the meeting and they did not have sufficient time to examine it carefully or to consider it with their advisers. It was accordingly suggested at the meeting of the Standing Committee that the discussion on this item may be postponed till March next when a meeting of the Standing Committee will be convened. The Political Adviser agreed to this postponement.

5. At the last meeting of the Standing Committee, attention was invited to the fact that the Indian States (Butler) Committee classified the States in para. 11 of their Report[5] into three distinct categories:—

(i) States the Rulers of which are members of the Chamber of Princes in their own right;
(ii) States the Rulers of which are represented in the Chamber of Princes by representative members;
(iii) the remaining States, Jagirdars and Estates.

The Committee pointed out in para. 17 of their Report that in the main their "remarks and proposals have in view the first two classes only of Indian States". Later, in para. 58 of their Report the Butler Committee have recorded their strong opinion "that in view of the[6] relationship between the Paramount Power and the Princes, the latter should not be transferred WITHOUT THEIR OWN AGREEMENT[7] to a relationship with a new Government of British India[8] responsible to an Indian legislature". This dictum, the Princes feel, should apply irrespective of the fact whether the authority concerned is in British India or a State. The Standing Committee accordingly reiterated the view of the States that their relationship with the Crown cannot and should not be altered or transferred to any other authority without the free consent of the Rulers concerned.

[1] Enclosed in a letter of 1 February 1944 from the Maharaja of Patiala to Sir F. Wylie explaining that the letter to Lord Wavell had been decided upon at the informal meeting of the Standing Committee of Princes.
[2] L/P&S/13/974: f 265. [3] No. 251. [4] L/P&S/13/981. [5] Cmd. 3302.
[6] Cmd. 3302 has 'in view of the historical nature of the relationship . . .'
[7] The capitals are not in Cmd. 3302. [8] Cmd. 3302 has 'government in British India'.

6. It is understood that out of the attached States, there are only 22 whose Rulers are entitled to vote for the election of the Representative members of the Chamber of Princes. The Standing Committee suggested that at least in the case of these States, except where Rulers of any of them may have freely consented to the new arrangements, the implementing of the plan of attachment may be postponed till the proposed discussion of the Standing Committee with the Representatives of the Crown Department next month. The States earnestly rely on Your Excellency for sympathetic consideration of this suggestion. In view of the traditional relationship between the Crown and the States, and having regard to the spontaneous response of the States—big and small—towards War effort, this request deserves special consideration, particularly as no harm can ensue as a result of the maintenance of the *status quo ante* 16th April, 1943, at least for the purposes of co-operation in War measures as regards distribution of commodities etc. for these few States only for a few months.

7. The Standing Committee understood from Your Excellency's Political Adviser that a reference on this subject has been made already to His Majesty's Secretary of State for India. In this connection, with a view to assisting Your Excellency towards a satisfactory and agreed solution and having regard to the vital issues involved, it is earnestly requested,

(a) that a few select Representatives of the Standing Committee and of the States concerned may be afforded an opportunity of meeting Your Excellency and your Political Adviser before the announcement of the decision of His Majesty's Government;
(b) that Your Excellency may be pleased to communicate to His Majesty's Secretary of State the views of the Princes on this subject.

Trusting this finds Your Excellency in the best of health.

Yours sincerely,

YADAVINDRA SINGH

351

Government of India, Home Department to the Secretary, Political Department, India Office

Express Letter, L/P&J/8/625: ff 17–18

No. 29/1/44-Poll. (I) NEW DELHI, *1 February 1944*

Mrs Sarojini Naidu is only member of Congress Working Committee now at liberty. She was released unconditionally after Gandhi's fast on grounds of health and until recently lived quietly in her home in Hyderabad State. About a week ago she seems to have started propaganda tour, to coincide with Independence

Day,[1] of which we had no previous warning. She opened with an Independence Day message at Allahabad on January 23rd which local press adviser somewhat leniently passed for publication.[2] She then came to Delhi gave interviews to two foreign correspondents and held press conference on January 25th. Provincial Governments had previously been warned not to allow Independence Day celebrations and Press was warned to be careful about publishing her statements. Main object of her statement at press conference was clearly to vindicate Congress and rally support for their policy thus discouraging any attempt to resile from August Resolution. Blame for disturbances was thrown on Government and special point was made of exonerating Congress Leaders from charges of advocating violence or being pro-Japanese. After full consideration we decided no part of the statement could be passed for publication, and Press Agencies were informed accordingly. Several newspapers however, including two in Delhi—*Hindustan Times* and *National Call*[3]—published accounts from their own correspondents with full knowledge of advice given to Press Agencies. We have accordingly found it necessary, after consulting, but without receiving support from, Central Press Advisory Committee, to pass precensorship orders against these two papers in respect of statements since August 8th 1942 made by or attributed to Gandhi or any member of Congress Committees that have been declared unlawful associations or comments thereon. We have also advised Provincial Governments to proceed likewise against other offenders. Outgoing messages referring to statement have also been stopped. We were unable to take action against Mrs Naidu herself before she left Delhi but on arrival in Lahore on 26th morning, Punjab Government served her with order prohibiting her from addressing meetings or making communications to press and we have since passed similar orders with all-India effect under clause in new Detention Ordinance corresponding to Defence Rule 26 (1) (f).

Independence Day itself seems to have passed off fairly quietly judging from Press reports, though attempts at demonstrations were made in many places. Official reports have not yet been received.

Above is for information in case news reaches England which may provoke questions in Parliament.

R. TOTTENHAM
Addl. Secretary to the Government of India

[1] See No. 345, note 2.
[2] A report of Mrs Naidu's Independence Day message in *Tribune* of Lahore is on L/P&J/8/625.
[3] Copies of the *Hindustan Times*' and *National Call*'s accounts are on the same file.

352

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *1 February 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Your letter of 12th January 1944[1] arrived just before mine of 25th/28th January[2] was despatched, but I thought I had better answer it by the next bag.

2. You already know my views about the Cabinet's decision[3] on Bengal. The Cabinet would to my mind have been on surer ground if they had based their decision on the effect on outside opinion, in the U.K. and U.S.A., of which they must be the judges. The effect in Bengal itself and in India outside Bengal of a proclamation under Section 93 is surely a matter on which the Cabinet must rely on *my* judgment. You regard ineffectiveness in a Ministry as a doubtful ground for dismissal; but if complete ineffectiveness in a matter on which so many lives depend is not good ground for dismissal, what is? We must make the best of the decision, and hope that Casey will succeed in stiffening the Ministry. His main difficulty will be the strengthening of the administrative machine. I am getting him sixteen officers from the Army, and trying to get forty more from the Provinces. He has asked for another eighty or so, and for about fifty subordinates. He will have to get all the men he can locally, and quite realises this. When I have sent him the original fifty-six, he will, in Maxwell's opinion, with which I agree, have to wait until the needs of all the Provinces have been assessed and we are able to make a firm demand on the Army for help. The Provinces were asked to submit returns which are now due, showing their immediate shortages, and it will not take very long to have them scrutinized. Bengal has not so far been very good at digesting additional officers, and Casey will take some time in getting the first fifty-six settled in. As far as I know, his own men from the Mid-East have not yet arrived. In addition to Murray and Elmhirst, he has in view half a dozen Indian Army Officers who were working in the Food organisation in Syria.

3. I am passing on your paragraph 3 to the Chief. We shall certainly need some men on the civil side, and I have no doubt that the Army will need some too. The officer problem is very difficult, and at Auchinleck's request I have just asked the Governor-General of New Zealand if some men from the ranks of the New Zealand Forces could be made available as officers in British Units in India. Owing to a change in planning, a good many New Zealanders who had qualified, and in some cases actually been appointed as officers, were reverted to the ranks. I have had a helpful reply, but it will be some time

before the New Zealand Government can say definitely whether they can spare any men.

4. Your paragraph 4, in which you deal with the future of the R.I.N., is also for Auchinleck, and I am passing it on to him. There will undoubtedly be some permanent increase in the R.I.N. after the war, but it is impossible at present to say what view the Indian Government of the future is likely to take. I agree that we ought to get as clear as we can on this matter before the war ends.

5. I have briefed you very fully on the need for very substantial imports of foodgrains, and as you will have seen from my last letter, experience on tour convinces me that I have not in any way overstated the case. The recent rain in the north has improved the wheat prospects, but it is now clear that sowings not only in the Punjab but in the North-West Frontier Province are considerably less than last year. The last official fortnightly report from Madras mentions a partial failure of the millet crop owing to insect pests and shortage of winter rain. The most elaborate calculations can be upset by comparatively trifling variations in rainfall, and unless the Central Government can demonstrate that supplies are available and that people will not be allowed to starve, the flow of foodgrains from the villages into the markets will slow down or get into the wrong hands. You cannot control panic or even nervousness among millions of small people unless they are quite certain that you are on top, and you cannot convince them of this unless you hold a reserve which can be established only by imports.

6. I see Rowlands regularly. As far as I know he has plenty to do, for in addition to his work for me, he is Mountbatten's Economic and Financial Adviser. I do not think he has yet decided how to dispose his staff when Mountbatten moves his headquarters; but he is in regular correspondence with Monteath, and sends all his letters to Jenkins for me to see. I gather from Jenkins that some of his staff have not a very full day's work, but Rowlands has not made any report to me about this yet.

7. I realised that Anderson might consider that Rowlands was not sufficiently experienced in international finance to make a suitable Finance Member. You know my views on this question, and I need not enlarge upon them. I still think the Cabinet are making a mistake in not agreeing to an Indian member.

8. I am passing your paragraph 8[4] about the participation of India in the Empire Air Training Scheme on to Auchinleck. I doubt if there is anything we can do about this now. If there is, I agree that the matter could be raised through MacKay.

MacKay has not yet arrived, and I have so far been unable to extract from Azizul Haque any recommendations for the reciprocal appointment in

[1] No. 325. [2] No. 344. [3] No. 320. [4] Omitted from No. 325.

Australia. I am seeing him very shortly, but doubt if he will have any suitable recommendation to make. I am clear that we must send someone of high standing but it will be very difficult to find a man who is suitable and willing to go. N. R. Sarker is a possible, but he has, I believe, settled down again in business, and is not very fit.

[Para. 9, on the Save the Children Fund's anxiety at the use of their name by an Indian organisation; and para. 10, on the Colonial Office White Paper on mass education in West Africa, omitted.]

11. I am discussing the possibility of a visit by a delegation of the British Council with Jogendra Singh, the Member primarily concerned, and Mudaliar, who was in on the discussions on this subject in London. I agree that if the delegation is to get a good reception, it must be free from any taint of Government patronage or conservative politics. Hill's visit[5] has been very popular, but even so he has not had an entirely smooth passage, and he was surprised and shocked at the refusal of some of the Fellows of the Royal Society to attend the admission ceremony. Their refusal was mainly due to some personal feud, but it was unfortunate all the same.

12. I am glad that Seymour, to whom I spoke on the subject in Delhi, was eventually instructed[6] to raise the matter of the unheralded journeys of the Generalissimo and Madame through India, but I can only regard the explanation given in his telegram No. 55,[7] which has been repeated here, as unsatisfactory. I do not press for anything further to be done in the matter now, though I am convinced that the action of the Generalissimo, prompted no doubt by Madame, amounted to deliberate rudeness, given Madame's previous journeyings in two directions through India without warning, and on the second occasion after protest had been made. I shall be grateful if you will let Eden know my views.[8]

13. Casey is in bed with influenza and dysentery—an unfortunate start. I hope he will soon be about again.

5 See No. 298, note 6. 6 See No. 346, para. 12.

7 In his tel. 55 of 22 January 1944 to the Foreign Office, Sir H. Seymour reported the Chiang Kai-sheks as having explained that when invited to the Cairo Conference they had been asked to keep their movements absolutely secret and therefore had told no one of their arrangements. If, in future, Mr Churchill were to ask them to advise any authorities concerned of their route, they would be only too glad to do so. L/P&S/12/783.

8 A letter explaining Lord Wavell's views as in this para. was sent to Mr Eden by Mr Amery on 9 March 1944. *Ibid.*

353

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 255

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *2 February 1944, 5.50 pm*
Received: 2 February, 6.45 pm

No. 223–S. Your telegram No. 1840[1] of 22nd January. Famine enquiry. I have again discussed in Council with the following results.

Your paragraph No. 1. Object of limiting enquiry to Bengal was to ensure quick results. All-India enquiry would take a long time and involve extensive touring of Provinces and States. Council agree to All-India enquiry provided report on Bengal comes first.

Your paragraphs 2 and 4. Enquiring body should consist of Chairman of calibre of Hailey, an agricultural expert, a Public Health expert, and a business man. With a Chairman of Hailey's experience it would be unnecessary to include an Indian Civil Service Officer serving or retired as member. The two experts and the business man should be Indians if possible. All other experts should be witnesses and not repeat not members or assessors.

Your paragraph No. 3. Current knowledge of Bengal affairs should be provided by Secretariat. Secretary should be Bengal officer not closely involved in food administration and not required as a witness.

Your paragraph No. 5. Noted. The enquiry between March and November was not rigid. Choice lies between immediate enquiry during emergency and enquiry at a later date, when we hope conditions will have improved. During critical summer months officials will be very busy and Bengal climate might be trying to members from United Kingdom. Council wished that enquiry should begin as soon as possible. Secretariat staff should in any case be appointed.

Your paragraph No. 6. Noted together with information in your 21 (? 65)[2] about proposed discussion with Hailey.

Your paragraph No. 7. There is no objection to wider terms of reference. Wording of Council of State resolution[3] might be followed as closely as possible.

Your paragraph No. 8 noted.

2. Food Department will now take the matter up and further references will be from them. Grateful for earliest possible information about Hailey.

[1] No. 339.
[2] The reference is presumably to tel. 2161 of 26 January in which Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell that Lord Hailey was en route to the U.K. and would discuss the famine enquiry with him on arrival. L/E/8/3320.
[3] See No. 238, note 10.

354

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 77

L/E/8/3323: f 432

India

Shipments of Food Grains to India

memorandum by the minister of food

MINISTRY OF FOOD, W. 1, *4 February 1943*

1. I wish to bring before my colleagues certain aspects of the problem raised by the Secretary of State for India in his paper (W.P. (44) 63)[1] so that the issue may be considered as a whole.

2. *Ceylon.*[2] Ceylon needs a minimum of 10,000 tons of rice a month if she is to maintain the production of rubber, tea and other essential commodities and provide labour for military purposes. The general ration has been reduced to 4 lbs. of cereals per person per week of which only 1 lb. can be taken in rice, compared with the present ration of 8 lbs. of cereals in Calcutta and 7 lbs. in Bombay. It is generally agreed to be impossible to reduce the rice ration further.

3. Owing to the small crop in Egypt, it is highly improbable that enough rice will be obtained from that source to supply Ceylon after March 1944. Shipping difficulties preclude regular shipments from Brazil and no alternative source of supply is available unless India will agree to resume shipments.

4. The export from India to Ceylon of 10,000 tons of rice monthly from her crop can make no appreciable difference to India, but is of critical importance in an area of high and growing strategic importance, both to the Empire as a whole and to India in particular.

5. *Groundnuts.* The prospect of a serious shortage of oils and fats in the world is now generally appreciated. India has always been an important exporter of groundnuts, but is now refusing to allow more than 200,000 tons to be exported in the year ending 31st October, 1944, unless an assurance of imports of cereals can be given. If it is agreed that India should import wheat, I suggest that she should be asked to release in the year ending 31st October next, 475,000 tons of groundnuts over 400,000 tons of which has duly been purchased by the Ministry of Food. The groundnuts are required not only for the United Kingdom but for the Dominions and Colonies and for urgent War Office needs in the Middle East.

6. *World Wheat Position.* Although on supply grounds there is not sufficient reason at this moment to raise serious objection to the Indian request for this

large quantity of wheat, I think that the War Cabinet should be aware that there is a prospective world shortage of cereals.

7. Although stocks of wheat have been increasing substantially in North America, Australia and the Argentine over the past few years and reached a record high level in July 1943, these reserves are likely to decline by 17 million tons before July 1944 and in the following year may be depleted still further to a dangerously low level. In North America there is now insufficient wheat available at the ports to meet the needs of Italy and Portugal after satisfying other immediate needs (e.g. of the United Kingdom). During the past few days, the United States food authorities have made the following announcements:—

(a) The United States cannot meet the requirements of Italy.

(b) They must be regarded in future as a wheat importing country. 175,000,000 bushels (say, 4,500,000 tons) of wheat need to be imported into the United States from Canada this year.

(c) They cannot honour their obligation to supply free wheat or relief under the International Wheat Agreement.

8. There are also acute internal transportation difficulties in North America. Even in May when the Great Lakes thaw, it is doubtful whether it will be possible to move to the seaboard all the wheat which will be required. Accordingly, Australia and the Argentine may well have to continue to bear the full weight of the burden thrown on them by these developments in North America.

9. Australia is already exporting wheat and flour at the rate of about 150,000 tons a month and this figure will be increased appreciably by Italy's needs which cannot be met from North America. When the Balkans fall into our hands, there will be fresh and heavy demands. If India's request were met in full from Australia, we would have to supply the Mediterranean theatre increasingly from the Argentine rather than Australia, with a resulting increase in the strain on shipping and foreign exchange. Alternatively India's request would have to be met partly from the Argentine.

10.[3] I am awaiting a full review of the future position of wheat from the Combined Food Board, and when the Cabinet has decided how much wheat

[1] No. 347.

[2] A War Cabinet Paper by the Colonial Office circulated as W. P. (44) 76 of 3 February stressed, on the lines of paras. 2–4 of this document, the importance of rice imports for Ceylon and urged 'it be made a condition of import assistance to India that the Government of India agree, in return, to permit the export of 10,000 tons a month of rice to Ceylon'. L/E/8/3323.

[3] An obvious typist's error in this para. was corrected by the War Cabinet Offices in a corrigendum dated 5 February, and the revised version is printed here.

India should receive, I would wish to refer the problem of meeting this requirement to that Board immediately.

11. The Secretary of State for Colonies and Ministry of War Transport concur in the general terms of this paper.

J. J. LL.

355

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/34: f 139

5 February 1944

3–U. Prime Minister has asked Mr. Butler to take charge of the office during Secretary of State's absence. Butler intends to confine himself to matters requiring Cabinet or Ministerial discussion or of first importance and on these he will consult Secretary of State.

2. Butler is most anxious that no publicity be given here or in India to his participation and only occasions on which he is likely to appear publicly in this capacity is in passage of amending legislation about States attachment, and possibly adjournment motion on 17th February about women in coal mines.

356

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Casey[1]

L/E/8/3312: f 440

D.O. No. F. 188(34)–GG/43 *6 February 1944*

My dear Casey,

Many thanks for your letter of 26th January 1944.[2] I agree that the Bengal Government must not tolerate attempts to frustrate its food policy, whether the method employed is to undermine confidence in a general way, or to encourage active non-co-operation. Criticism of Government is of course legitimate, but when criticism is designed not merely to secure a change of policy but to ensure that the policy now approved by the Bengal Government in so vital a matter as the feeding of the Province is a failure, criticism ceases to be legitimate and falls within the definition of a "prejudicial act" contained in rule 34(6) of the Defence of India Rules. This definition includes "any act which is intended or is likely to impede, delay or restrict . . . the supply or distribution of any essential commodity". The Bengal Government would therefore be justified in

using the means at its disposal to confine criticism within legitimate limits. I am advised that the most effective executive weapons are, against public meetings rule 56 of the Defence of India Rules, and against newspaper and other written publicity rule 41 and rule 40, in that order. The weakness of rule 40 is that under it some damage will ordinarily have occurred before action is taken. The Orissa Government recently took advice from the Home Department about the use of rule 56, and I enclose a copy of the correspondence,[3] which may be of some use to you. It is clear from your letter that you are already aware of other possible remedies such as prosecutions under rule 38[4] of the Defence of India Rules, and the use of Ordinance III of 1944.

2. I believe that the powers available are adequate. A campaign to sabotage the Bengal Government's food policy in my opinion constitutes a grave menace to the peace or tranquillity of the Province, and I agree with you that you have a special responsibility to see that the campaign is suppressed. It follows that it is your duty to act in your individual judgment, and you should not hesitate to reject the advice of your Ministers and take such decisions as you think fit if the advice tendered to you is unsatisfactory.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 10 February 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

[2] No. 345. [3] Copy of this correspondence is on L/E/8/3312.

[4] Defence Rule 38 prohibited *inter alia* the making, printing, publishing or distribution of any information likely to assist the enemy, any 'prejudicial report', or any confidential information. It provided a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment with fine.

357

Mr Casey to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/652: ff 102–4

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA, *7 February 1944*

My dear Lord Wavell,
Although I have been in bed with a wretched fever for 8 days out of the 16 since I was sworn in—I have achieved some active impressions of things here.

2. I think it is generally agreed that the main problems here are administrative. Although Bengal's administrative machine may have been reasonably adequate in peace time, it is quite inadequate to cope with the problems that the war and the food situation have produced.

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 17 February 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

3. I am much impressed with the urgent necessity of improving the administrative machine by importations of new personnel from outside Bengal—considerably beyond what you have been good enough to provide and to promise already. I am having the deficiences in personnel carefully investigated now—and I will approach you again about this as soon as possible. I am sure that this personnel problem is far and away the most important and urgent to tackle.

(It occurs to me to ask if it might not be possible to get a few good men of medium rank from the Ministry of Food in England? Their work is, I understand, all going smoothly and well—and it might well be that a few could be spared for essential work here).

4. I expect you realise that there is some bad feeling between the Centre and this Province—indeed that Bengal tends to be regarded as the '*enfant terrible*' of the Provinces. I've been given various explanations as to how this has come about—but the main point, I believe, is that this antagonistic feeling should be eliminated and relations improved. The bad effect of its continuance is that officials tend to resent being sent (or sent back to) Bengal, and so tend not to work with any marked enthusiasm, when they get here. It has been suggested to me that it would be a good thing if Mr Hutchings (Secretary of your Food Department) would come to Calcutta for a few days each month, for two or three months on what would be a good-will or "pep" mission. I would be glad to put him up on at least the first of such visits, and, if possible, on the others.

5. Distribution (transportation) is another matter I am looking into with General Wakely. He is making certain proposals through the regular channels. If this doesn't succeed, I may need to take the matter up with you.

I found, on taking over here, that a proposal existed, for three out of the eight battalions under General Stuart to be withdrawn from service with the Government of Bengal by 15th February. I asked that their departure should be delayed until 15th March, so that we might have some opportunity to replace their lorried transport at least. This is being done.

I place transportation high amongst our list of necessities in Bengal. Stevens (Civil Supplies) lays the greatest stress on the good psychological reaction that he believes will follow when we are able to move rice freely from surplus to deficiency areas. As you know, the main railway system of Bengal (Bengal and Assam Railway) has been paralysed for some time and all traffic has been held up owing to the necessity to untangle the great congestion of railway wagons. However, I am told this will straighten out within a week.

6. I am astonished to find that there isn't an Economic Adviser to the Government of Bengal. I would like to have a word with Sir Theodor Gregory about this at an early opportunity. I would believe such guidance to be essential particularly under today's conditions.

7. I look forward to getting your reactions to my letter of the 26th January[2] with regard to dishing those who, from political motives, are trying to undermine confidence in the food situation in Bengal. Pending your reply, I have not yet pressed my Chief Minister on the subject. I believe we have to improve our propaganda machine in Bengal in order to get our story down to the cultivators. I am working to this end.

8. I am writing you separately[3] about the provincialisation of the Public Health Services in the districts—about which you wrote me recently.

9. In recent years a new type of expert has evolved—known as "Organisation and Methods" advisers. The Treasury at home has a few of them. They advise on the organisation and the administrative set-up in a Department, with a view to efficiency, avoiding duplication and saving manpower. I had one of these Treasury "organisation and methods" advisers in the Middle East for six months with considerable advantage. If you have any of them at New Delhi, I'd be glad to know.

10. Since I have been here, I have had constantly in mind the problem of Section 93—and I have discussed it privately with all those senior officers with whom it could be discussed with safety. My present impression (which is, as yet, only tentative) is that there is more to be lost than gained by the use of 93. I would say that at least four out of five, with whom I've discussed it, are against 93. The advantages are known and realised (greater enthusiasm on the part of the relatively few officials at the top who now feel frustrated by delays)—but the disadvantages are generally believed to outweigh the advantages.

However, I am not at all sure that the greater part of the feeling of despondency on the part of senior officials is not due to the inadequacy of the administrative machine throughout the Province, rather than to the delays due to Ministerial Government.

I am sceptical at present as to whether we could do a better job, on net balance, under 93 than with a Ministry. However, I will let you have a more mature view on this later.

In an endeavour to improve the spirit amongst our officers and officials generally, I am proposing shortly to send them individually a letter from myself, in which I will endeavour to put matters into perspective for them.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

R. G. CASEY

[2] No. 345. [3] Not printed.

358

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 16th Conclusions, Minute 6

L/E/8/3323: ff 408–9

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 7 February 1944 at 5.30 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of item 6 were: Mr S. M. Bruce, Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr R. A. Butler, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell

INDIA

Shipment of Food Grains

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 152nd Conclusions, Minute 2)[1]

The War Cabinet at their meeting on 10th November 1943 had agreed that shipping should be provided for 100,000 tons of food grains to India during the first two months of 1944.

The War Cabinet now had before them—

(a) A memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P.(44) 63).[2] After surveying the harvest returns and the present prospects, the Viceroy stressed the importance of food in maintaining India's economic stability and in helping to close her inflationary gap. The Viceroy urged that it was of essential importance that, as recommended by the Gregory Food Grains Committee, His Majesty's Government should provide shipping to carry imports of 1 million tons of wheat for current consumption and half a million tons for reserve. The Secretary of State for India strongly supported Lord Wavell's recommendation.

(b) A note by the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs (W.P.(44) 76)[3] circulating on behalf of the Secretary of State for the Colonies a memorandum by the Colonial Office urging that it be made a condition of import assistance to India that the Government of India agree in return to permit the export of 10,000 tons of rice a month to Ceylon to meet the minimum essential requirements of that island.

(c) A memorandum by the Minister of Food (W.P.(44) 77)[4] stressing the importance of the export from India to Ceylon of 10,000 tons of rice monthly from her crop, and urging that if it was agreed that India should import wheat, she should, in view of the probable serious shortage of oils and fats in the world, be asked to release in the year ending 31st October 1944, 475,000 tons of ground nuts, over 400,000 of which had duly been purchased by the Ministry of Food.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION, speaking on behalf of THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, said that both he and the Viceroy were anxious to secure the War Cabinet's approval to the proposals in W.P. (44) 63, both on psychological and political grounds, and in order to buttress the position before the present crop came on the market, in April or May. The Government of India, who had just fixed a maximum price for millets [and] were considering a maximum price for rice, had in these last few weeks taken definite steps towards a well based all-India food policy. On psychological grounds, it would be difficult for India to agree to export ground nuts or rice unless India's demands for the import of wheat were met.

THE PRIME MINISTER questioned the statistical basis of the Government of India's case. The high average production of the three years ended 1938/9—i.e., some 53½ million tons—had been cited in W.P. (44) 63 as the normal crop. To this the high average net imports of 1,298,000 tons for the three years ending 1939/40 had been added, to produce a total average consumption of 54,793,000 tons. As the estimated crops only amounted to 53,000,000 tons, a deficit in 1944 of about 1,000,000 tons resulted, to which there had to be added 500,000 tons for special defence needs. But for the four years ending 1941/42, the average consumption was 52,331,000 tons—i.e., 2½ million tons less than the figure cited by the Secretary of State. This difference would of course more than make good the 1½ million tons calculated deficit.

It looked too, as though in calculating the 53,800,000 tons available, the fact stated in the paper, that the rice crop was expected to be up by 2 million tons and the wheat crop down by 1 million tons, had been left out of account. That would appear to make an extra 1 million tons available.

He was gravely concerned in these circumstances at a suggestion that shipping, of which we were in such short supply, should be used on a major scale to import food into India, given the effect of its diversion alike on operations and on our imports of food into this country, which could be further reduced only at the cost of much suffering.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION expressed his readiness to examine at once the statistical basis of the case, and added that the Viceroy was ready to send an expert representative home to explain the position in greater detail.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that while he had been able to provide the cereals previously sanctioned by the War Cabinet for India, there was no prospect of any further shipping being made available by the United States, owing to the increasing demands for shipping for military purposes. It would be quite out of the question to find shipping for the million and a half

[1] No. 219. [2] No. 347. [3] See No. 354, note 2. [4] No. 354.

tons now asked for, which would represent 250 voyages from Australia to India. Any shipping allocated would inevitably reduce the U.K. import programme.

The Minister added that he was ready to ensure continuance of imports of rice in Ceylon for the present, at the rate of 10,000 tons a month, either from Egypt or from Brazil.

Other points taken were as follows:—

(a) Even on the basis of the figures in the memorandum by the Secretary of State for India, the shortage in Bengal was a very small percentage of normal consumption.

(b) It was urged that shortage in Bengal was partly political in character, caused by Marwari supporters of Congress in an effort to embarrass the existing Muslim Government of Bengal, the Government of India and His Majesty's Government.

(c) The course of prices and the actual food situation in India tended, moreover, to depend on political and psychological factors. India in the past had relied on Burma, both for very substantial annual imports and for reserves. With Burma in enemy hands, the situation could be exploited for either political or economic reasons.

(d) To the extent that the shortage was political, the Viceroy's general position would be strengthened if he was given the means to deal with it; and provided shipping was available, the way to break a speculative market was to ship in wheat.

(e) The Government of India were unduly tender with speculators and hoarders. It was pointed out on the other hand that they were doing their utmost to establish a sound food policy. The Viceroy too, had been very successful in carrying with him the important Muslim grain producing provinces and it was desirable to strengthen him by giving him the support for which he asked.

On the suggestion of the Prime Minister the War Cabinet—

agreed that the matter should be further examined, with particular reference to the statistical basis of the paper that had been put before them, by the President of the Board of Education on behalf of the Secretary of State for India, in consultation with the Ministers of Food and War Transport and the Paymaster-General; and that it should be considered again in the light of their report.

359

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 404

IMMEDIATE *8 February 1944, 3.40 pm*
PRIVATE

259–S. My private telegram No. 98–S[1] of January 12th. Food imports. Immediate decision is now essential. We are pledged to settle and hold statutory prices for wheat from next *rabi*. Food Department cannot proceed unless assured of imports on scale asked for. Timing of price settlement is a most delicate matter, and present uncertainty about imports makes negotiation impossible. We shall lose all advantage of progress we have made in restoring confidence and getting food control on proper basis unless I can have at once required assurance on import of grains. I regard this question as absolutely vital for whole economy of India.

[1] No. 321.

360

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/52b: f 52

PRIVATE *8 February 1944*

260–S. Finance Membership. Please let me know how matter stands as early decision is desirable. It may interest Cabinet to know that Raisman's presentation of budget proposals to Council was admirable and that he dealt most skilfully with strong opposition by some members. Proposals were generally accepted.

361

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: f 77

PRIVATE *8 February 1944*

263–S. Prince for War Cabinet. It is now certain that Bhopal will be elected Chancellor as there is no opposition. While this would not be insuperable objection to his going to U.K. for period it will be much better that he should

remain in India at present as Chancellor. Jam Sahib has been seriously ill and Wylie thinks that in any event change is desirable. I propose to ask Kashmir to go if you approve. It is very desirable to get some of the big Princes interested and Kashmir in particular. It will also avoid sending two Moslems. Kashmir would do it well. I am not certain if he will accept but am sure he will appreciate being asked. Failing him I shall ask Bhopal. Please reply urgently as time is short.

362

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: ff 80–1

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *8 February 1944, 2.45 am*

PRIVATE

128. Your private telegram 214–S.[1] Small Committee of Ministers of which Secretary of State is member has been appointed to consider agenda for Prime Minister's meeting and will meet this week. At present only guidance available is that Conference will cover post-war questions generally and that it is desirable Noon should come here versed with present position on such subjects as post-war commercial policy, post-war civil aviation, monetary policy and if possible with views of Government of India on these subjects in light of their delegation's reports on official level discussions with Dominions to be held this month. In para. 4 of your letter of 12th January[2] you mentioned that in some of these Government of India had not as yet formed views and we suggest that if possible they should endeavour to do so before Noon leaves, and that he should be supplied with briefs on these matters. The above suggestions are of course not comprehensive and Government of India may have others.

2. For general Cabinet purposes Noon should be informed of case for food imports, and general food situation, and such matters if any in supply sphere as may be likely to give rise to important issues (not necessarily on Cabinet level) with H.M.G. Possibly he might become involved in London stage of Anglo-American enquiry into economic assistance required by India as a base and might be given any background for this that you consider suitable. Noon will also (jointly with Secretary of State) represent India on London Food Council and Commonwealth Supply Council which however only meet occasionally.

3. Secretary of State proposes to provide official from staff here to act as Secretary to representatives for Cabinet and official business but would be glad to know in due course whether they will bring any personal staff. Suggest

Noon arranges hotel accommodation through High Commissioner. Mudaliar and Jam Sahib are thought to have found Savoy satisfactory and conveniently close.

[1] Informing him of Sir Firoz Khan Noon's enquiry as to subjects for discussion in London and asking whether any indication could be given. L/PO/6/111.
[2] No. 324.

363

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: ff 400–2

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *8 February 1944, 10.55 pm*
PRIVATE

133. Your No. 259–S.[1] Cabinet considered our request for import of 1½ million tons of wheat yesterday.[2] Case was put strongly both in memorandum[3] submitted and orally in discussion with all possible emphasis on political, psychological, and economic grounds.

2. Paper before Cabinet was based on your recent telegrams, with statistical appendix indicating following as best estimate available. Figures in thousands:—

Supplies:

Rice	26,000
Millets and Maize	12,200
Wheat	10,000
Gram	3,500
Barley	2,100
Total 1943–44	53,800

Requirements:

Normal requirements	54,793
Extra requirements for Defence	484·5
Total requirements	55,277·5
Against estimate crops of	53,800
Leaving a net deficit of	1,477·5

3. Normal requirements above are as in para. 2 of Food Dept. tel[egra]m 10767,[4] d[ate]d 9 Dec[ember]. Defence requirements as in para. 6 of Food Dept. tel[egra]m 297,[5] d[ate]d 6 Jan[uary.]

[1] No. 359. [2] No. 358. [3] No. 347. [4] The India Office file has been destroyed.
[5] No. 316; the date should be 11 January.

4. Leathers emphasised (*a*) no prospect of further shipping from U.S.A., (*b*) it would be out of question to find shipping for 1½ million tons for India, (*c*) any shipping allocated would inevitably reduce United Kingdom import programme.

5. Prime Minister took definite lead in discussion and contended that for four years ending 1941/2 average consumption was 2½ million tons less than figure of 54,793 in para. 2 above.

6. Cabinet referred matter for further examination by *ad hoc* committee including Ministers of War Transport and Food with particular reference to "statistical basis" indicated above and agreed to consider again in light of committee's report. Committee meets Thursday. Telegraph most immediate any observations you wish to make on above.

364

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, R/30/1/4: ff 92–3

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *9 February 1944, 10.45 pm*
PRIVATE

No. 280–S. Your private telegram 133[1] dated 8th February. Food imports. I cannot add much to my telegram 98–S[2] of January 12th. Bengal famine was one of the greatest disasters that has befallen any people under British rule and damage to our reputation here both amongst Indians and foreigners in India—you are better able to judge the effect at home and abroad—is incalculable.

2. Attempt by His Majesty's Government to prove on the basis of admittedly defective statistics that we can do without help demanded would be regarded here by all opinion British and Indian as utterly indefensible. Please warn your colleagues once more that rigid statistical approach is futile and that my views are based on personal discussions with all Governors and visits to seven of the eleven Provinces.

3. Prime Minister's argument summarised in your paragraph No. 5 is statistically fallacious for three reasons. First. Carry-over from year to year is unknown. The probability is that cultivators' stocks are less now than pre-war. Second. In 1936–37 and 1937–38, the two years immediately before his series the net amounts available for consumption averaged 55·8 million tons or half a million tons above present estimated needs. See Gregory Committee's report Chapter 2 paragraph No. 3.[3] Third. Population increase from 1938–39 to 1943–1944

inclusive must be of order of 30 million justifying increase in consumption of order of four million tons over consumption of 1938–1939.

4. I am quite satisfied that on figures alone our demands are justified. But psychological aspect is of even greater importance. In every Province I have visited there is insistence of opinion official and non-official that only hope of solving India's food problem is firm control by Central Government, and there is growing confidence in power of Central Government to do so, *provided* it has at its command substantial reserve of imported grain. This proviso has been made in every single instance. Announcement that such a reserve would be available would have an immediate and salutary effect on prices everywhere and would do more than anything to stabilise India's economy. On the contrary once it is known that His Majesty's Government is not prepared to help India, and I do not see how the fact can be concealed since amount of grain imports is a question closely studied, I fear that all our work at control of past months, which has had considerable success, will be lost, prices of grain and of all other commodities will rise, and situation may pass out of control.

5. I warn His Majesty's Government with all seriousness that if they refuse our demands they are risking a catastrophe of far greater dimensions than Bengal famine that will have irretrievable effect on their position both at home and abroad. They must either trust the opinion of the man they have appointed to advise them on Indian affairs or replace him.

[1] No. 363. [2] No. 321.
[3] This is apparently a mistake for '2', which para. gives figures for the years mentioned.

365

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, R/30/1/4: f 91

MOST IMMEDIATE *9 February 1944*

281–S. Following from Viceroy for Prime Minister. Private.

You will see my telegram[1] of today to Secretary of State about food imports. I fully realise difficulties of shipping but situation will be really serious if we cannot command imports we have requested. I am sure you will agree that we cannot possibly risk another breakdown and famine which would be on larger scale than 1943. Please help me all you can. Casey has unfortunately been ill since arriving in Calcutta but is recovering.

[1] No. 364.

366

Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/221: f 119

Report No. 3 *9 February 1943*

I am not happy about the way my Ministers—particularly the Chief Minister—sometimes allow purely party or personal considerations to colour their official action. They are constantly trying to please their partisans by doing them favours. As a rule, these favours are not individually of any great importance—the appointment or transfer of a relation, the grant of a permit to export *gur* or potatoes, the allotment of funds to some particular village, and so on. But the total sum of them has brought great discredit on the Ministry. That I would not greatly mind, but the undiscerning villager thinks it is "Government"—in the sense of the British Government—that is showing partiality. Sometimes, too, in really important matters Ministers have shown weakness. After the recent communal riot at Haripur the Chief Minister, in considering punitive or preventive measures, was hopelessly swayed by fear of antagonising his own party. He has also in at least one case tried to use his powers of clemency under the Criminal Procedure Code for party purposes.

When resisted in matters of this kind, the Chief Minister is always quite frank about his reasons; he is trying to keep his party together. There is no suspicion of anything like personal dishonesty. But I am afraid there is no question that the Muslim League Ministry has far less sense of duty to the public than their Congress predecessors had.

2. Independence Day on January 26th was a failure from the Congress point of view. No meeting attracted any audience to speak of, except the one at Charsadda, where about 1,400 people were present and which was addressed by Dr. Khan Sahib. In Peshawar City itself, where the biggest meetings used to take place, there was a very poor attendance and no procession. Speeches in general seem to have been aimed, not so much as usual at Government, but rather at the Muslim League and Indian officials. The interest of all the local Sikhs has now shifted from the Haripur incident to the Sikh bye-election which takes place this month and seems likely to go in favour of the candidate sponsored by Tara Singh, the Akali leader, who is on the side of the present Ministry.

367

War Cabinet

Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements. Paper I.F.R. (44) 2

L/E/8/3323: ff 390–1

The Statistical Basis for the Government of India's Case

MEMORANDUM BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

WAR CABINET OFFICES, *9 February 1944*

(1) Following is statement of available supplies (i.e. of presumed consumption of principal foodgrains in India.)

Supplies of the Principal Foodgrains in India (excluding Burma)
(000 tons)

Year	*Crops*	*Imports*	*Total supplies*	*Running average*	*3-year average*
1929–30	53,530	1,500★	55,030	...	...
1930–31	54,026	1,500★	55,526	55,278	...
1931–32	55,028	1,500★	56,528	55,695	55,695
1932–33	52,566	1,500★	54,066	55,287	55,373
1933–34	51,386	1,500★	52,886	54,807	54,493
1934–35	52,637	1,742	54,379	54,736	53,777
1935–36	49,885	1,246	51,131	54,221	52,799
1936–37	55,481	629	56,110	54,457	53,873
1937–38	54,324	1,044	55,368	54,558	54,203
1938–39	49,584	2,221	51,805	54,283	54,428
1939–40	53,061	993	54,054	54,262	53,742
1940–41	50,173	431	50,604	53,957	52,154
1941–42	51,817	—361	51,456	53,765	52,038

★ Conventional figure as imports from Burma prior to the separation of Burma from India are not separately recorded. Import figures are for the year succeeding the crop year.

(2) The following is the Government of India's reason for using the three pre-war years rather than the later figures suggested by the Prime Minister.

An estimate of total cereal requirements based on average production plus net imports of all cereals for the years immediately preceding 1941/42 is faulty as during the three years included in the period there has been a tendency on the part of Provinces and States to underestimate crops.

For a more correct estimate of the normal cereal requirements, the three pre-war years ending with 1938/39 plus the average net imports for the three years ending 1939/40 should be taken as the basis.

The figures submitted in the memorandum[1] to the Cabinet were for this

[1] No. 347.

reason compiled on this basis. The figures for the years to 1941/42 are misleading.

(3) Import requirements over a period of years have been more or less constant whether harvests have been good or bad. Years of good harvests have not substantially lessened import requirements since the millions of producers normally undernourished will eat more if the food is available or will keep back from the market larger quantities as a reserve.

It is impossible to estimate the quantities which under pre-war conditions were held from year to year in reserve or which were so held in years of normal or good harvests. It is quite clear, however, that such reserves as were available have now disappeared. The two good years 1936/38 were followed by four lean years which would substantially reduce reserves. In addition the growth of population which became apparent on its present scale in the late twenties would be commencing to take effect on the requirements for adult feeding. These facts coupled with the extra food needs of the increasing industrial population have eliminated all reserve stocks.

(4) The figure of 26 million tons of rice given in the appendix[2] as the estimated crop for 1943/44 shows an increase of 1½ millions over the figures for 1942/43 and over the average for the three preceding years. The 1942/43 wheat crop was 10,971,000 tons and the figure in the estimate for 1943/44 has been quoted as 10 million tons or approximately 1 million tons less.

[2] To No. 347.

368

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: f 76

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *10 February 1944, 8 pm*

138. Your private telegram 263–S.[1] I see no objection to your inviting Kashmir provided that you are satisfied that State's internal situation, which I gather has recently been somewhat disturbed, permits of his absence at this juncture. If he accepts, I very much hope he can be dissuaded from bringing undesirable advisers such as Haksar or Kak. If Kashmir declines I agree you should invite Bhopal, whose absence for say two months would not I should have thought greatly prejudice his duties as Chancellor.

[1] No. 361.

369

Mr Amery to Sir J. Anderson

L/PO/8/52b: f 46

10 February 1944

My dear John,
I believe Monteath has shown you Wavell's enthusiastic commendation[1] of Raisman's handling of his budget proposals in Council. It does seem to me that there is a very strong case for letting him put into execution the plans he has worked out, and it seems to me that we had much better make up our minds to do as the P.M. originally suggested and prolong Raisman for a year. In his last letter[2] to me Wavell has again spoken in the strongest terms against the idea of bringing in Gordon and is convinced that that would have a disastrous effect on Indian public opinion. As you know, I rather liked the idea, but I do not think, whatever good reports you may still get about Gordon, that we are entitled to force him upon the Viceroy. After all, this is a man whom he has got to have as one of his chief colleagues on the Council and whose support he may need on other matters besides finance. Wavell has had such a wealth of troubles since he took on and has had his considered views overridden more than once. I do not think it would be fair to drive him into a mood of real exasperation with the Cabinet.

Yours ever,
L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 360. [2] No. 333, para. 3.

370

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *10 February 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have two letters from you to answer, one written on the 19th and 20th[1] January, and the other on 27th January.[2] I have telegraphed[3] saying how sorry I am you are laid up, and I hope you will be back at work before this reaches you.

2. Casey is better, and was about again on Monday, 7th February. He has so far given me no general opinion of Bengal, and I doubt if his ideas can be clear for some little time yet. He has not yet asked for Murray or Elmhirst, but has

[1] No. 334; the date should be 19 January only. [2] No. 346. [3] Not printed.

made an enquiry about the Indian Army Officers he intended to get from Syria. . . .[4]

Conditions in Bengal have not changed. Rationing in Calcutta has started better than might have been expected, but there is still widespread lack of confidence in the Bengal Government, and control in the districts is not yet working properly. I enclose a copy of a note[5] of a talk on 8th February between Jenkins and Major Mayne, the Military Intelligence Officer, who compiles the Food Reports for Eastern Command. This note is a fairly complete summary of the main points taken in recent Intelligence reports. As I have said from the first, Casey's most difficult task will be to strengthen the administrative machine. The 56 officers referred to in paragraph 2 of my letter of the 1st February[6] are beginning to move to Bengal, but some of the Provinces have been sticky about releasing men, and it will be some time before all of them are in position.

Council agreed in the main with your views about the famine enquiry and I sent you a telegram[7] summarising their opinion immediately after the meeting. Casey, to whom I sent[8] a copy of the correspondence, is very doubtful[9] about the wisdom of holding the enquiry at once. He thinks that the officials and Ministers will be far too busy first with the Bengal Legislature and then with urgent administrative problems to give the enquiry much attention during the summer. He welcomes the wider terms of reference you suggested, and obviously feels that the Central Government should not be protected from criticism. He would prefer Woodhead to any other Chairman—I think myself that Hailey would make far the best Chairman if he is available. Finally he stresses the bitterness between some of the Bengal officials and the Bengal Ministers, and between Bengal and the Central Government, and suggests that officials giving evidence must be assured of complete immunity from victimization. I have referred his letter to the Food Department who are responsible for further action about the enquiry. I still think that if we are to honour our commitment, the sooner we begin the better; and however quickly we move, the enquiry will almost certainly not begin until after the end of the Budget session of the Bengal Legislature. I shall be interested to hear whether Hailey agrees to act as Chairman.

3. I have sent you a reminder[10] about the Finance Membership. If you cannot agree on a first-class man from home, you might do worse than give Raisman an extension. I have telegraphed[11] a summary of the Council discussion on his Budget proposals. He handled Council admirably, and was both patient and lucid in dealing with criticisms.

I am sorry the Archbishop of Canterbury troubled you about the Prize Bonds. I was approached in the same way by the Metropolitan here, and I pointed out to him in reply that there was no question of investors losing their principal, and that the Prize Bonds could hardly be described as an immoral

lottery. The Metropolitan is probably unconvinced; he is a most obstinate old man, and has become rather a nuisance. I shall probably refer to raffles at Church bazaars as much greater gambles if he bobs up again.

4. The food position shows little change. Wheat prices in the Punjab have fallen sharply owing presumably to the combined effect of the recent rain and of the arrival on the market of the *kharif* grains. The fall has not yet been reflected in the United Provinces, and cannot yet be regarded as anything more than a seasonal variation. In Madras prospects have deteriorated owing to insect pests in the millet crop in the dry districts, and this change probably counterbalances any change for the better in the Punjab. I see from recent telegrams[12] that you are worried about Travancore and Cochin. So am I; but Sir C. P. Ramaswami Aiyar has told the Food Department that Kunzru's recent accounts of conditions in Travancore are much exaggerated, and that the Servants of India Society, to whom every facility was extended by the Travancore Government, have been out to hinder rather than to help. Their line is to ask the Travancore Government to do what is obviously impossible, and then to launch press attacks against them. I am keeping a very close watch on supplies to Travancore and Cochin, and the position is reviewed at the weekly Council meeting.

I have just replied[13] to your telegram[14] about the Cabinet discussion[15] on food imports. Srivastava and Hutchings, the Secretary in the Food Department, are now seriously alarmed, and I am clear that we cannot hope to establish and enforce a sound food policy unless we get the imports we have demanded and can say that we are going to get them. This will be the critical year for food control, and once we have demonstrated that we can hold prices and organize fair distribution, things will in my opinion be easier. All over India the question is one of confidence. In Bengal we see the consequences of a complete breakdown of confidence, and a similar breakdown elsewhere is by no means impossible.

We are still in difficulties about coal. I have seen Young twice, and he has drawn up a plan under which the control both of production and of distribution is to be concentrated in one Department. He recognises that safety regulation ought, for obvious reasons, to be quite separate, and that the authority responsible for the production and distribution of coal cannot interfere with the operation of the railway. Subject to these two exceptions, he would like everything to do with coal handled by one organization, of which the Coal Commissioner would be the head. He would need good Controllers both for production and for distribution, and would have to exercise extensive powers under Statutory Control Orders. I think Young is right, and as soon as he has worked out in

[4] Personal comment omitted. [5] L/E/8/3312: ff 390–1. [6] No. 352. [7] No. 353.
[8] L/E/8/3320. [9] *Ibid.* [10] No. 360. [11] Not printed. [12] L/E/8/3346.
[13] No. 364. [14] No. 363. [15] No. 358.

greater detail the relations between his distribution side and the railways, I intend to get the new organisation established. As often, there is some competition between Members of Council about the responsibility for coal, but I do not think this will give me very much trouble once Young can produce a complete scheme.

I am sorry you have been troubled about the return of women to underground work in mines. You can hardly use the argument that this was a decision of Council which it was impossible for me to override. The coal position was so bad that something had to be done, and the decision hardly seemed to us here to be controversial. The arrangement is temporary, and we shall exclude women from the underground workings again as soon as the war emergency is over. A motion in the Assembly about it was defeated.

[Para. 5, on an agreement with the United States on Calcutta Port and the Assam Line of Communication; and para. 6, on the wages of Indian seamen, omitted.]

7. The suggestions in your letter of the 19th/20th January about a constitutional enquiry are interesting. You think that we might send an Indian delegation abroad, or alternatively set up a body here consisting of Provincial Premiers, a few selected politicians such as Rajagopalachari, and some representatives of the Princes. I am still doubtful of the utility of more or less academic discussions. In the minds of most people the communal issue overshadows everything else, and until the Muslim League will discard Pakistan or the Congress and the Mahasabha will accept it in principle, I do not think that any serious discussions are possible. I am gradually getting to know a few of the politicians not committed to the Muslim League or the Congress. Sapru and Jayakar are both past any active influence on affairs. K. M. Munshi, of whom Lumley thought highly when he was a Minister in Bombay, seemed to me a light-weight. Maharaj Singh, who is prominent among the Liberals, has little influence and no constructive ideas. M. N. Roy has personality and courage, but has a long way to go before he could attempt all-India leadership. I hope to see Rajagopalachari this month at Madras; but on the whole, the prospects of any practical move towards a settlement are not bright.

I have telegraphed[16] for your comments the political passages in the draft of my address to the Legislature on the 17th February. The address will please no one, but it goes as far as I think it possible to go at present. Mrs Naidu, in her message for "Independence Day" and her talk with Press representatives,[17] made it very clear that the Congress leaders have no intention of withdrawing the Quit India resolution or of modifying their attitude to the British. As long as they are wedded to this barren policy, we cannot open negotiations with them, and until others have the courage to come forward and speak for India, we cannot open negotiations with anyone. The Assembly Session has had a

stormy opening, but Maxwell has kept his end up well, and was not defeated by the supporters of Mrs Naidu or by the advocates of a general release of prisoners.

8. I am just replying[18] to your telegram[19] about the proposed visit to India of a delegation from the British Council. Jogendra Singh, Mudaliar and Hill are all in favour of the visit, though I believe Hill feels that the best way of improving relations is to arrange an interchange of University lecturers and to stimulate special friendly relations between colleges and institutions in India and selected opposite numbers in the U.K. And I am not sure that the approval of Singh and Mudaliar is not due to politeness as much as anything! I am myself lukewarm about the visit. When I was at home I understood that the idea was that Hill should do a reconnaissance on behalf of the British Council. By the time the proposed delegation reaches India the hot weather will be approaching and I cannot really believe that they will accomplish much. I should prefer to postpone the visit to next cold weather when a party can be formed after Hill has discussed his experiences with those concerned in London.

I am all for the study of poetry in India, and the idea of developing poetry societies might well be pursued if the British Council get going out here.

9. I have still not selected the High Commissioner for Australia. Azizul Haque has at last submitted some names, and I have had some suggestions from Governors also. I have telegraphed to the Governor-General apologizing for the delay and saying that I am trying to find a really good man. I note your view[20] that the External Affairs Department should be responsible both for relations with the Australian High Commissioner here and for our man in Australia. I am going into this and will let you know the result as soon as possible. Here again there is some competition between my colleagues, and Khare is most anxious that he should not be cut out in any way by Azizul Haque.

There are signs of some improvement in South Africa. Khare was warned privately by Shafa'at Ahmad Khan to damp down demands for action as Smuts seemed likely to make a conciliatory move. I enclose a copy of a personal telegram[21] I sent to Smuts and of his reply.[22] Khare has succeeded in suppressing

[16] In tel. 253–S of 7 February. L/P&J/8/513. [17] See No. 351.

[18] In tel. 289–S of 10 February which is similar to this para. [19] See No. 325, note 9.

[20] In tel. 2737 of 2 February 1944, Mr Amery suggested it would be more in harmony with the arrangements for Dominion High Commissioners in the United Kingdom and more acceptable to Dominion Governments if the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. were made responsible for both contact and control. The Australian High Commissioner would, at the same time, have the right of direct access to any other Dept. of the G. of I. L/P&J/8/190.

[21] Tel. 243–S of 6 February 1944 asking whether Field Marshal Smuts was able to give him any news of conciliatory action by the South African Government. L/P&J/8/299: f 8.

[22] Tel. 27 of 7 February 1944. In this tel. Field Marshal Smuts much deprecated 'precipitate action in a matter like reprisals which would be new and most regrettable departure in British system'. He

one adjournment motion which was to have been moved on the first day of the Assembly Session.

[Para. 10, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, omitted.]

11. Azizul Haque and Mudaliar have agreed on a list of industrialists to be invited to visit the U.K., and if they so desire, the U.S.A. Mudaliar's idea is that there should be no formal delegation; that the men selected should proceed independently; and that it should be left to them to get together at the other end if they so desire. It has always been my idea that the visit should be unofficial; but it is important that it should result in a joint impression of conditions in the U.K. at least, and of the possibility of help from the U.K. in India's reconstruction planning. I am asking Azizul Haque how best the matter can be arranged. He might perhaps prevail upon one of the industrialists to act as the leader and to get the others together in the U.K. when they have all arrived. Otherwise I quite agree that their journeys should be spaced, and that they need not move about together as a team.

12. Many thanks for the information about the proceedings of the Cabinet Finance Committee. I am not making any move here on your suggestions as I suppose we shall be told if any reduction of the Indian Army or change in the financial settlement is to be seriously examined. I see great difficulty in changing the financial settlement—political opinion runs high about it even in the Executive Council.

[Para. 13, on Sir R. Dorman-Smith's position, omitted.]

14. In dealing with the escapades of the Generalissimo and Madame you suggest that I might keep in close touch with Mountbatten. I am already doing so, and it was only through him that I heard of the last unauthorised journeys.

[Para. 15, on customs formalities for air travellers, omitted.]

16. I have just returned from an inspection of the Black Watch, and am about to fly to the Punjab for the day. My future plans are for the time being unchanged.

hoped Lord Wavell would accept his assurance that he was seeking a solution to the present difficulties. Problems of sites for an Indian High School and Technical College were being overcome and ways were being probed to deal with Indian residential requirements and civic representation on town councils. Field Marshal Smuts concluded: 'With goodwill on both sides way out of present difficulties may yet be found and situation should not be rendered more difficult by undue haste and impatience.' *Ibid.*: f 14.

371

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *10–11 February 1944*
Received: 21 February

I am indeed grieved to have had to let you down at this rather critical time. But I went down suddenly 10 days ago with kidney trouble and it looks as if I should be away from active work for at least another fortnight. R. A. Butler is representing me, so far as necessary, at the Cabinet and in the House. But he has his own heavy work over the Education Bill.

2. At the Cabinet the other evening they agreed that the Kathiawar Attachment Bill should go forward at once in the House of Lords and I see no difficulty about that in the Commons either. The food import question is going to be the real snag. I had a long talk with Leathers a little while ago in which he took the line that there was no possible means of shipping more food to India unless one or other of the various contemplated military operations were called off. At the Cabinet the other evening[1] Butler was very closely heckled and the attempt made, on statistical grounds, to prove that India really had got all she needed. Butler stood up well to the bowling and the whole matter was referred to a Committee including Leathers, Llewellin, the Minister of Food, and the inevitable Devil's Advocate in Cherwell. I only hope that Butler may be able to extract something, but I frankly confess I see very little prospect of the million and a half tons or anything approaching it. I know your appalling difficulties and hate to be pessimistic and will certainly go on doing my best as soon as I get back into action. I have just seen your telegram to Winston[2] and your effective reply[3] to my report[4] of the Cabinet meeting and must hope for the best.

3. Raisman seems to have put up a really good budget and I was delighted to get your telegram[5] saying how ably he handled the matter in Council. It looks to me as if prolonging him for a year will probably be the best solution of the Finance Member problem. Here again it is terribly annoying my being tied by the leg for the moment, but I will do what I can to ginger up Anderson and the P.M.

4. You will no doubt have seen Seymour's telegram No. 55[6] of the 20th January to the Foreign Office, which was repeated to the Government of India, reporting that he had raised with the Generalissimo and Madame the matter of

[1] See No. 358. [2] No. 365. [3] No. 364. [4] No. 363. [5] No. 360.
[6] See No. 352, note 7; the date should be 22 January.

their recent journeys across India. Eden has written to me[7] saying that while he agrees that the results are not altogether satisfactory, he thinks it is the best we are likely to get and therefore suggests that we leave the position as it is. I have agreed to this, although it seems clear that no real undertaking has been given except in cases where an invitation has come from the Prime Minister and they have been specifically asked to notify the authorities in India or elsewhere of their itinerary. It is quite possible, of course, that they might undertake some new journey on an American invitation, or even on their own initiative, and on such an occasion they have not undertaken to give us any notice. However, we have brought the matter directly to their notice and if there is any trouble over any future journey we shall at any rate have this interview on record.

5. I don't know what sort of instructions you propose to send to your representatives at the economic discussions here. My own conviction is that all the schemes put forward by the Cabinet and discussed at Washington are wholly mischievous and would be disastrous to this country and to the Empire generally if they were carried out. I console myself, however, by the thought that all this spinning of fancy international schemes administered by Committees with no real power is not going to come to anything. Probably the United States themselves, for whose sake we have put them forward, will reject them, and certainly most other countries will. Meanwhile, we in this country will be held up, unable to lay down any definite agricultural or industrial policy for the future. That does not apply to India and I can hardly imagine that India will want to tie herself down either to the proposed international monetary fund or to the proposed low tariff club. Mudaliar knows my views on this subject very well.

6. The whole of all this illusionism is based on the legend that the great world depression of 1931 was caused by tariffs, quotas, exchange restrictions, &c. and that all will be well if we only remove "barriers to trade" and "discriminations" and get rid of exchange restrictions by restoring some world currency system. The facts, however, are just the other way. It was the attempt to pour the new wine of this century into the old nineteenth century bottles of the automatic gold standard, the Most Favoured Nation Clause and uncontrolled investment that brought about the crash of 1931, and the subsequent rush to cover behind tariffs, quotas, exchange controls, &c. by the various countries was the only thing they could do to mitigate the disaster. In our case we were able to do so with the minimum of loss by going off the gold standard, introducing a tariff and, shortly afterwards, making agreements with the rest of the Empire at Ottawa.

7. I saw Knollys shortly before he left. He argued that if India were to insist on Indian pilots and crews for all the trans-Indian traffic of Imperial Airways,

a great many passengers would then insist on going by K.L.M. He thought that a reasonable compromise was possible on the basis that most of the traffic across India should be carried by Indian crews, but that certain express services should be run direct with European crews, these services not necessarily being allowed to pick up passengers from one part of India to another.

7 In a letter of 3 February 1944. L/P&S/12/783.

372

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 99

L/E/8/3323: ff 385–7

Indian Foodgrain Requirements

REPORT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

INDIA OFFICE, *11 February 1944*

The War Cabinet, at their meeting on the 7th February 1944, (W.M. (44) 16th Conclusions, Minute 7)[1] appointed a Committee consisting of myself (in the absence of the Secretary of State for India) the Minister of Food, the Minister of War Transport, and the Paymaster General, to examine further the request of the Government of India for continued importations of foodgrains, with particular reference to the statistical basis of the case set out in the Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 63).[2]

The Committee has met and agreed to report to the Prime Minister in the following terms:—

The Committee accepted the figures given by the Prime Minister in the Cabinet as being in accordance with the data available. It was agreed however that there are inevitably a variety of reasons why Indian statistics must always be in doubt. The Government of India, to whom a summary of the considerations leading up to the Cabinet Conclusions of the 7th February had been telegraphed,[3] had defended the figures which they had used, and the Viceroy's reply on this subject is contained in an annexure to this report. It is, however, not on statistics alone that the Government of India's demand for imports is based.

2. It was felt to be a hopeful feature of the situation that a considerable fresh acreage (4½ million acres) had been planted with rice this year. The estimate

1 No. 358; 'Minute 7' should read 'Minute 6'. 2 No. 347. 3 No. 363.

of the crop put forward by the Government of India was considered to have made allowance for a low yield per acre. At this stage the Government of India were not prepared to go beyond their forecast of 26 million tons of rice, nor was the President of the Board of Education in a position to quote any higher figure. The general view of the Committee, however, was that since the reports about the rice harvest have been good a more normal yield might be expected, which would give something like 2 million tons more than the Government of India's estimate. If conditions of transport in India allow, this extra supply will be available for consumption, although the whole of it may not reach the urban consumer. The Committee's general conclusion was that if these extra two million tons became available, no actual deficit should occur, especially in view of the Viceroy's sterling efforts to curb inflationary tendencies. This extra tonnage might indeed eventually provide the reserve on which the Viceroy is depending to control the prices of food by means of the new measures which he himself has initiated.

3. The Committee considered the needs arising from the presence of additional defence personnel in the country and from the requirements of India as a potential base for the S.E.A. operations. The importance of these considerations was fully accepted.

4. The Minister of War Transport gave it as his most solemn opinion that additional shipping requirements needed for strategic purposes, some of which have been imposed upon him quite recently, made it impossible for him to contemplate providing shipping from British or U.S. sources to cover the haul from Australia to India. In the circumstances the Minister of War Transport considered that it was impossible for him to contemplate the continuation of the imports of wheat from Australia into India, even at their present rate. He suggested, however, that provided Iraqi barley could be used to good advantage by India he could, in conjunction with the Minister of Food, provide for the shipment of possibly 50,000 tons of this barley to Indian ports. The Minister of Food undertook to examine whether this amount could not be screwed up to as much as 80,000 tons.

5. It was agreed that in these circumstances the Minister of War Transport would provide shipping for the rice needs of Ceylon throughout the year if it should not be possible to procure them from India, although the Minister of Food could make no promise of finding supplies from other sources before July.

6. The Committee felt obliged to accept the position as stated by the Minister of War Transport with such mitigation as was afforded by his offer to do his best with shipments of Iraqi barley.

R. A. B.

Annexure to No. 372

In reply to a telegraphic summary of the considerations leading up to the Cabinet conclusions of 7th February, the Viceroy has telegraphed as below:—

[*There follows the text of paras. 1–4 of No. 364 from "Bengal famine was one . . ." except that para. 3 begins: "Argument summarised in . . ."; in its sixth sentence "the series of years quoted" replaces "his series" and its seventh sentence is omitted.*]

373

Mr Butler to Mr Churchill

L/E/8/3323: f 388

MOST SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *11 February 1944*

Minute by President of the Board of Education

Prime Minister

1. According to the decision of the War Cabinet,[1] the Minister of War Transport, the Minister of Food and the Paymaster General came here for a conference yesterday on the subject of the Viceroy's requests for the continuation of imports of grain into India on an increased scale.

2. I attach a private telegram[2] to you from the Viceroy together with a private telegram[3] to the Secretary of State. You will see from these that the Viceroy continues to attach first class importance to his demands. It was against the background of the telegram to the Secretary of State that we examined the situation yesterday afternoon.

[*There follows the substance of No. 372.*]

R. A. BUTLER

[1] No. 358. [2] No. 365. [3] No. 364.

374

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to the Maharaja of Patiala

L/P&S/13/974: f 126

D.O. No. F. 88/5/GG/38 *11 February 1944*

My dear Maharaja Sahib,

I have received Your Highness's letter of 1st February[1] in which you have asked me to receive a few select representatives of the Standing Committee and of the

[1] No. 350.

States concerned to discuss the scheme of attachment which has been introduced in Kathiawar and Gujarat in terms of the Crown Representative's Communiqué of the 16th April 1943.[2] In a letter which I sent to His Highness the Chancellor from Calcutta on the 19th of December[3] I informed the Jam Saheb that I would be glad, at a somewhat later date, to meet representatives of the Princes for an informal discussion of current problems affecting the Indian States. In that letter I suggested that, when the discussions in that [? the] Standing Committee in January were over, the Chancellor and I might have a preliminary talk with a view to eliciting the main topics which the Princes' representatives would wish to raise at the subsequent meeting when that came to be held. As you are aware my proposed meeting with the Chancellor could not however take place due to His Highness's unfortunate indisposition. I would propose therefore instead that I should meet the new Chancellor when he comes to Delhi for the March meeting of the Standing Committee and hold my preliminary discussion with him. Thereafter I intend to invite representatives of the Princes to meet me for a more detailed discussion on a date to be mutually agreed upon between us.

As this meeting—to discuss general problems affecting the States—is in prospect I do not myself think that any useful purpose will be served by inviting, as Your Highness suggests, a few select representatives of the Princes now to discuss the Kathiawar and Gujarat attachment scheme in particular. This scheme, as Your Highness knows, has been the subject of discussion with the Rulers concerned for a number of years past. At the moment in fact the principal if not the only point in connection with it which has been engaging my attention has to do with the decision in the Court of the Judicial Commissioner that the basis of the attachment plan is itself illegal. I am glad to be able to inform Your Highness that steps have been taken to resolve this difficulty by legislation and that the necessary measure[4] was in fact introduced in Parliament on 8th February. With all these circumstances in my mind therefore I have come to the conclusion that a discussion of the attachment plan with representative Princes is not necessary at this stage. I am arranging however to have a copy of Your Highness's letter on the subject sent to the India Office so that it can be laid before the Secretary of State for his information.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[2] See No. 350, note 2. [3] No. 273. [4] The India (Attachment of States) Bill.

375

Mr Churchill to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (via India Office)

Telegram, Wavell Papers. Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6, p 13

IMMEDIATE *12 February 1944*

No. 3721. Following personal and most secret from Prime Minister. Your No. 281–S.[1] Cabinet will consider matter again officially on Monday. I will certainly help you all I can but you must not ask the impossible.

[1] No. 365.

376

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 103[1]

R/30/1/4: ff 89–90

INDIAN FOOD GRAIN REQUIREMENTS

NOTE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

INDIA OFFICE, *13 February 1944*

By direction of the Prime Minister I circulate, for consideration with W.P. (44) 99,[2] a draft of a possible official telegram to the Governor-General, conveying to him a decision in the sense of the conclusion of the Committee on Indian Food Grain Requirements.

R. A. B.

Annex to No. 376

DRAFT TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO GOVERNOR-GENERAL

SECRET. War Cabinet have given most earnest consideration to your request that shipping should be made available for 1½ million tons of imports of food-grains into India during 1944.

2. They wish me to emphasise that they are fully conscious of the gravity of the internal economic situation in India, of the seriousness of the recent famine

[1] In a minute of 14 February 1944 to Mr Baxter, Mr Dibdin explained that 'things happened on Saturday [12 February] afternoon' with regard to food imports. Mr Churchill had decided to have a special meeting of the War Cabinet on 14 February to consider the Indian case and had directed Lord Leathers to consider whether he could not find more shipping than was contemplated in No. 372 in view of Lord Wavell's latest tel. Mr Churchill had also directed Mr Butler to say nothing to India at the present stage, but to let him have a draft tel. based on No. 372. L/E/8/3323 : f 378.

[2] No. 372.

in Bengal and of your anxieties over the future, and they have watched with great appreciation the strenuous endeavours which you and your Government have made to take control of India's economy and to formulate and rally support for an all-India policy for the control of food. They recognise that it cannot be alleged that the Government of India are not taking every measure at their command to deal with their own difficulties.

3. The War Cabinet have observed with satisfaction the success that has attended the efforts of your Government to increase the acreage under rice in the present year. Indeed the crop prospects would seem to promise such an improvement on last year that any serious or widespread shortage might be avoided. Nevertheless, they appreciate to the full the inadequacy of statistics as a sole basis on which to assess your needs and the importance of the psychological and other factors which lie behind your demand. It is not because H.M.G. fail to recognise the strength of the case which you put forward that they have regretfully concluded that they cannot meet your requirements. On the contrary, they are deterred from doing so only by the serious consequences which would result in other directions.

4. The shipping situation of the Allies is such that the War Cabinet do not feel able at this critical juncture of the war to make ships available for further imports of wheat. The strategic requirements of forthcoming operations are such that consistently with meeting them it is not possible to provide shipping for any imports from Australia and the most that can be done is to provide shipping for 50,000 tons of Iraq barley to Indian ports. It might be possible to increase this amount to 80,000 tons.

5. H.M.G. are very conscious of the difficulty of the decision which faces them in this matter. You and your predecessor have emphasised throughout that your need is for an undertaking to import a sufficient quantity to provide reserve as well as one million tons annually for consumption, in order to enable an announcement to be made which will promote confidence and ease prices. They have had to weigh the grave considerations which you have put before them against the necessities of United Nations strategy and of forthcoming operations. These operations are vital for the whole Allied cause and H.M.G. feel that of the alternative risks between which they must choose, the risk in India is the one which must be taken.

377

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: ff 232–6

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *14 February 1944, 8 pm*

3795. Your telegram No. 223–S.[1] Famine enquiry. I have reconsidered matter in light of your observations and am particularly impressed with your feeling that it is necessary to ensure quick results with respect to Bengal. It seems to me, however, that even if first stage of enquiry is confined to situation arising in Bengal it will be inevitable, unless there is also specific limitation of kinds of topic which the enquiry is permitted to consider, that it will feel obliged to concern itself with causative factors arising elsewhere in India and also to embrace extensive subject matter including such economic questions as growth of population and land tenure (with its effect on methods of agriculture), political and communal considerations, constitutional questions, such as powers of Central Government and H.M.G., and such strategical and other circumstances as may have contributed to internal transportation difficulties or affected H.M.G.'s decisions in regard to shipping of imports.

2. Obviously enquiry of this kind of scope even in relation to Bengal troubles only would take considerable time and would require personnel of high standing, perhaps with chairman free of association with Indian administration. It could scarcely produce the quick report on Bengal which you desiderate and it is more than doubtful whether you could reasonably contemplate holding so wide an enquiry at all while active military operations are pending or in progress.

3. If, therefore, you remain of opinion that some enquiry must be undertaken at early date you might consider whether best course might not be to institute a quick enquiry of admittedly limited scope directed mainly to administrative measures required to meet circumstances such as occurred last Autumn particularly in Bengal, with terms of reference framed deliberately to keep it from dealing with wider issues though not necessarily from stating them.

4. It would doubtless be necessary in order to justify restriction of enquiry's field and satisfy conditions outlined in paragraphs 1 and 7 of my telegram 1840[2] to make clear that this enquiry was preliminary only and that the wider issues calling for a more radical and comprehensive enquiry would be pursued at the proper time.

5. It would probably be neither wise nor safe to rely on unpublished guidance given to Chairman to secure that he should direct along appropriate lines

[1] No. 353. [2] No. 339.

an enquiry of the limited kind contemplated and it would therefore be necessary to frame the terms of reference with extreme circumspection, and I am conscious of the difficulties involved. It might be helpful so as not to convey impression that door is being shut on eventual examination of fundamental issues to invite the initial enquiry, in addition to a quick report on administrative issues, to use its discretion in stating issues beyond its own scope which might call for fuller enquiry at later stage.

6. Following is a tentative sketch of terms based on the conception indicated above. Quote. To enquire with a view to very early report into the circumstances of the food crisis of 1943 in Bengal and elsewhere; to examine the administrative measures adopted in various parts of India; to consider how far the existing advice available to Governments and their officers for the combating of scarcity and famine should be modified or supplemented to meet any threat of recurrence of the special circumstances of 1943 and to state the wider issues if any which they consider relevant to the subject of enquiry but which are beyond the limitations imposed by the necessity for an immediate report that can be of practical application in 1944. Unquote. It might be an instruction to the body to make interim report about Bengal.

7. As regards chairmanship, I have discussed with Hailey and regret that he cannot serve in view of time which he thinks even limited enquiry would take and resultant disturbance of his important current activities in relation to Colonial affairs. Failing him, I would suggest Haig, Montmorency (if health permits which is doubtful) and Bourdillon in that order. Would you like me to make initial approach?

8. Question of personnel generally must be affected by extent to which we (a) contemplate full dress enquiry at later stage and (b) desire to use knowledge and experience of initial enquiry for the later. For example Chairman of first might if suitable be used to preside over second also or as member working with another Chairman. Our main concern should doubtless be to get initial enquiry launched without delay so that its report may be available for use in later months of this year. On assumption of limited type of enquiry contemplated above I have no comment to make on your revised proposals as to composition except that it seems hard on Chairman to deny him assistance of I.C.S. officer as originally contemplated, particularly if enquiry is to be rushed and it may be that whoever can be got as Chairman will stipulate for some such European reinforcement.

9. To the extent that views expressed in this telegram may conflict with those in my telegram 1840 they represent a change of mind but I think that any inconsistency is more apparent than real since objection I felt to limited terms of reference was related to hypothesis that there would be only single enquiry

and development of idea that it may appropriately take place in two stages arises from your stipulation that in advance of anything else there should be quick report about Bengal.

10. S. of S. has seen and approved.

378

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 19th Conclusions

R/30/1/4: ff 86–8

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 14 February 1944 at 5 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present were: Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr R. A. Butler, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Lord Cherwell

Indian Food Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 16th Conclusions, Minute 6)[1]

At their meeting on the 7th February, 1944, the War Cabinet had appointed a Committee consisting of the President of the Board of Education (in the absence of the Secretary of State for India), the Minister of Food, the Minister of War Transport, and the Paymaster-General, to examine further the request of the Government of India for continued importation of food grains, with particular reference to the statistical basis of the case set out in the memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 63).[2]

The War Cabinet now had before them—

(*a*) the report of the Committee presided over by the President of the Board of Education (W.P. (44) 99);[3]

(*b*) a draft (W.P. (44) 103)[4] of a possible official telegram to the Governor-General of India conveying to him a decision in the sense of the conclusions of the Committee.

THE PRIME MINISTER informed the War Cabinet that, besides the telegrams before them, there had been a further communication[5] from the Viceroy urging in the strongest terms the seriousness of the situation as he foresaw it, if the Government of India's full demand was not met. The Prime Minister added that the shipping difficulties revealed by the report of the Committee under the President of the Board of Education were very real. While he was in general

[1] No. 358. [2] No. 347. [3] No. 372. [4] No. 376. [5] No. 365.

agreement with the draft telegram to the Viceroy he was most anxious that we should do everything possible to ease the Viceroy's position. No doubt the Viceroy felt that if this corner could be turned, the position next year would be better. It was very important, too, that the difficulties seen by His Majesty's Government in acceding to a request so anxiously pressed by the Viceroy should be clearly stated in the telegram.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION observed that the Committee had felt that they ought not to go further than the conclusions set out in their report. But he feared that the decision would cause consternation in India. The Indian grain market was accustomed to depending to some extent on imports. The 50,000 tons of Iraqi barley now in view consequent on his Committee's report was not a large amount; its price would be high; again barley had not the same value, from the Indian point of view, as wheat, and its provision would not have the same effect, particularly in the Punjab.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that it would be out of the question for him to find shipping to maintain the import of wheat into India at a monthly rate of 50,000 tons for an additional two months. The best that he could do was represented by the proposed import of Iraqi barley. If, when the final figures of the rice crop were available, the Government of India's anticipation of an acute shortage proved to be justified he would then have tonnage in a position to carry to India about 25,000 tons a month. But even this help would be at the expense of cutting the United Kingdom import programme in 1944 below 24 million tons, this being the latest estimate in the light of increasing operational requirements. In the circumstances it was clearly quite impossible to provide shipping to meet the full demand of $1\frac{1}{2}$ million tons made by the Government of India.

The following suggestions were made for the amendment of the draft telegram:—

(*a*) It should be made clear that the Viceroy's request had been further considered by the War Cabinet.

(*b*) A paragraph should be added to the effect that shipping to carry any additional cargoes could only be provided by the United States, and that it was clear that any such request would be most unlikely to succeed unless it was put forward on the basis of the ascertained facts as to the 1944 harvest.

In this connection reference might be made to the seriousness of our own shipping position.

(*c*) The last sentence of the existing draft might be expressed differently, so as to make it clear that refusal of India's request was not due to our underrating India's needs, but because we could not take operational risks by cutting down the shipping required for vital operations.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL drew attention to the shortage of trained staff, at a time when the Indian Administration was making a strong effort to overcome a serious situation. Ought not the India Office to examine the lists of retired members of the Indian Services and consider whether any of them could be invited to return to India to assist the Government of India?

The War Cabinet—

(1) Gave general approval to the lines of the draft telegram to the Viceroy and asked the President of the Board of Education to arrange for a revised draft to be prepared, to meet the suggestions made in discussion, and submitted to the Prime Minister for his approval.[6]

(2) Asked the President of the Board of Education, on behalf of the Secretary of State for India, to arrange for the suggestion made by the Lord President of the Council as to the re-employment of retired members of the Indian Services to be examined.[7]

[6] Tel. 3891 of 15 February 1944, 6.40 pm from Mr Amery to Lord Wavell follows the draft in the Annex to No. 376, except that: Para. 1 begins 'War Cabinet have had another long special meeting to consider your request . . .'
Para. 2 begins 'War Cabinet wish me . . .'
Para. 3, third sentence. 'realize' replaces 'appreciate'.
Para. 5 reads: 'If in a month or two the facts show that the final figures for the rice crop do not provide the extra balance, which we have reason to anticipate, then we would be prepared to approach the Americans, who are the sole possible source, with a strong request that they should provide shipping assistance. It would be useless in view of United States operations to approach them save on basis of an ascertained shortage.'
Para. 6. As in para. 5 of draft, except that final sentence ends '. . . must choose, the risk of failure in Europe through shortage of essential shipping must not be regarded as the less important.' L/E/8/3323: ff 375–6.

[7] This examination was pursued on L/S&G/7/285.

379

Mr Churchill to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (via India Office)

Telegram, R/30/1/4: f 85

IMMEDIATE *15 February 1944*
PRIVATE

152. Following personal and Most Secret from Prime Minister. We have given a great deal of thought to your difficulties but we simply cannot find the shipping. Everything is involved in the Operation and our own import[s] cut to the barest minimum. The Secretary of State is cabling you at length.[1] Every good wish amid your anxieties.

[1] See No. 378, note 6.

380

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 23

PRIVATE *15 February 1944*

155. Following personal from Secretary of State. Am indeed truly sorry for disappointment which Cabinet decision on food imports must have caused you. Butler did his best and I am sure I could not have done better. Nor was there any lack of appreciation of your difficulties in War Cabinet. You are being left once again as in Middle East in 1940 with forces inadequate to meet the enemy surrounding your own.[1] Let us hope that Fortune which has so far dealt you nothing but bad cards will include some better ones in this year's deal.

[1] In Wavell Papers, Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6, p. 14 this sentence reads: 'You are being left once again as in the Middle East in 1940 with forces inadequate to meet enemy surrounding you and once again you will have to win through on your own.'

381

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *15 February 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have no letter from you to answer. I was very glad to have your telegram[1] saying that you were in touch with important matters, and I hope you are really on the mend.

2. There are no special developments in Bengal. The rationing of Calcutta seems to have made a fairly good start, though there is grumbling at the quality of some of the rice supplied, and some of the shops are said to have too many registered customers. There is also a good deal of discontent at the decision of the Bengal Government to make no distinction between industrial labour and the general population, but I do not know yet whether the Labour Unions will press seriously for an increased ration. Storage arrangements are still defective and large quantities of foodgrains are stacked under tarpaulins in the botanical gardens where they are being sorted and graded.

In the rural districts confidence is still lacking and in some of them the actual prices payable for rice are well above the control prices.

Casey has not yet given me any detailed opinion on the food situation—Hutchings, the Food Secretary, has been staying with him and will report to

me personally on his return on the afternoon of 17th February. But I have had one or two letters from Casey giving some very general impressions. He is shocked at the attitude of the Press and at the lengths to which the Opposition are prepared to go in order to discredit the Ministry.[2] He holds, in my opinion quite rightly, that there is a clear distinction between legitimate criticism and attempts to sabotage the Ministry's policy. It is one thing to suggest that the Ministry's policy is inadequate, and another to try to persuade the public that a second famine is imminent and that the only way of avoiding it is to hold or hoard foodgrains. When Casey wrote he was not sure how his Ministers proposed to act, but he suggested that he had a special responsibility under Section 52–(1) (*a*) to see that subversive propaganda was properly dealt with, and I have assured him[3] of my support. He agrees[4] with me that the weakness of the administrative machine is at the root of the trouble, and at present thinks that this has been a more important factor than Ministerial incompetence. He does not seem yet to have formed an opinion about the efficiency of his senior officers. I have no doubt that he will take a more definite line within the next few weeks. In the meantime officer reinforcements are beginning to arrive in Bengal, and I am told that about a dozen military officers have arrived or are on their way, and that six more are being selected. Of the 40 civil officers I was trying to get from the Provinces 18 or more are on the move, and the names of most of the remainder are before the Bengal Government. The Punjab and Sind have given me some trouble. The Punjab offered only one man now actually serving with them, and said we could take four others out of the army if we could get them. Sind objected to the financial terms, but had to find only one officer.

3. I am still without news about the Finance Membership. Raisman is now very restive and says that while he is quite prepared to accept retirement or an extension for a definite period, he is not willing to stay on as a stop-gap until His Majesty's Government find it convenient to replace him. He says, quite reasonably, that at 52 with a young family he cannot afford to do nothing, and that he does not want to be kept hanging about. I hope you may be able to let me have a decision very shortly.

4. The general food position shows little change. Prices have hardened again in the Punjab and the downward trend I reported last week must have been only a seasonal variation. Mudie has run into trouble in Bihar and seems to have been forced off his control price for paddy. It is difficult to say exactly what went wrong, but I suspect that Mudie fixed the control price at too low a level before he had bought adequate stocks. The result was that in Patna, where he had introduced rationing on the United Provinces model, the supply of rice suddenly dried up and the people not entitled to draw on the Government

[1] Not printed. [2] No. 345. [3] No. 356. [4] No. 357.

shops began to go short. An even worse crisis occurred in Bhagalpur—a much smaller place with, presumably, less adequate administrative arrangements than Patna. Mudie will probably be able to extricate himself and it appears from a letter from him to Srivastava, which I have seen, that he will not publicise the fact that his control has failed. He proposes to let the millers buy above the control price for paddy, and the effect on the control price for milled rice may not be very serious. Concurrently he will adopt the method successfully adopted in the United Provinces of quietly building up stocks even at considerable expense to Government in order to force prices down to a suitable level at a later date. As far as I know there are no significant developments elsewhere.

A Mrs Arthur Grenfell, who has been staying with us for a few days, brought me a message from the Archbishop of Canterbury who seems to have been attracted by a suggestion made by Horace Alexander and reproduced in the December issue of the *Christian News Letter* that the Bengal famine might be made the occasion for a reconciliation with Mr Gandhi. I enclose a copy of my letter[5] to the Archbishop which you should have in case he mentions the matter to you.

5. I have not yet had Young's final proposals for organisation at Centre of Control of coal. He has been discussing them with the mining interests in Calcutta and I am not sure when they will be ready.

6. Many thanks for the official and demi-official comments[6] on the draft of the political part of my address to the Legislature. I have adopted nearly all your suggestions. The only important one that I rejected was, I think, the addition praising the Executive Council. My draft contained what seemed to me an adequate acknowledgment of Council's services and I think it best not to lay it on with a trowel. My colleagues have done very well, but several of them are men of quite ordinary attainments and it would be a mistake to give too rosy a picture of their ability and achievement. I regard more than one as practically a complete passenger where administration is concerned, and should like to change them for more alive, though possibly less tractable members. Under present Constitution I seem however to be saddled with most of them for many years.

7. I had a letter from M. N. Roy, the Social Democratic leader, whom I saw lately, asking almost in so many words for seats for himself and one or two of his party on my Council, and for a subsidy for propaganda. He has more in him than most Indian politicians, I think, and I have him in mind as possibly of use; but as I minuted on his letter I am Viceroy and have no mind to be vice-Roy.

8. I am sending you a separate letter[7] giving my comments on the letter Hill wrote to you last December.[8] I hope I have not been too negative; I am all in

favour of progress on the lines Hill suggests as long as we are clear that there are certain limitations which cannot be surmounted for many years.

9. I have now had a list of "possibles" both to succeed Suhrawardy and for the appointment of High Commissioner in Australia. I shall telegraph to you as soon as I can about both appointments.

I am still having a little trouble over the South African controversy. In suppressing the adjournment motion to which I referred in my last letter[9] Khare seems to have given the Mover all the information he had about my private letter[10] to Smuts, and the possibility of a conciliatory move by the Union Government. As usual the information was passed on to the Press—in this particular case to the representative of the *Statesman*, and there has been a good deal of interest in my supposed personal intervention. I sent a private and personal telegram to Smuts apologising for the leakage, explaining the circumstances in which it occurred and expressing the hope that he had not been embarrassed. He has just replied saying that the Indian Press report was not reproduced in South Africa and that he has suffered no inconvenience. One of the great problems here is to ensure that secret information is kept secret. Benthall's intention to raise passenger fares on the railways by 25 per cent. was announced in the Press the day after it was discussed in Council, and I had to remind my Colleagues of their obligation to keep such matters to themselves. It is impossible to get the best out of any Member if he feels that the Viceroy holds back information affecting his department; on the other hand few Members are able to exercise any discretion if they are told fully what is going on.

5 In his letter of 15 February, after informing the Archbishop of Canterbury of the present food situation, Lord Wavell commented that on the political issue he did not feel less strongly than Mr Alexander but differed from him in his reading of the situation. Lord Wavell thought: 'it is a mistake to assume, as Alexander does, that the Congress leaders can be released without danger to the war effort, or that their release would make matters any easier for the Bengal Ministry or would assist the rehabilitation of the stricken areas. . . . I am afraid that the release of the Congress leaders would be more likely to increase communal differences than to allay them.'

He assured him that he would do all he could to effect a settlement, but felt that the chief need of the moment was administration to rehabilitate Bengal and to deal with the food and inflation problems. L/P&J/8/513.

6 *Ibid.*

7 In his letter D.O. F. 432(4)–G/43 of 14 February 1944 to Mr Amery, Lord Wavell thought Professor Hill was right about the feeling of inequality and frustration among many Indians. But he doubted whether the British could consciously do very much to remove this feeling. There was less immediate scope for original scientific work in India than in the U.K., U.S., Canada or Australia. He did not think the British had kept Indian scientists at arm's length or shown lack of trust in them and mentioned the India Board of Scientific and Industrial Research. Lord Wavell, nonetheless, believed there was a case for a Development Member of Council who would preside over the Reconstruction Committee and be responsible for the final presentation of all-India plans. L/E/8/2612: ff 313–16.

8 See No. 298, para. 5. 9 No. 370, para. 9. 10 Enclosure to No. 238.

10. I have sent you a telegram[11] about the visit of the Indian Industrialists to the United Kingdom and possibly to the United States of America. I had advised Azizul Haque to approach the persons selected by personal letter with a view to the settlement of details at a meeting here. [The remainder of the para., on arrangements for the visit, omitted.]

11. Our one day visit to the Punjab on 10th February was interesting. We flew to an airfield near Jullundur and saw some anti-erosion work in the neighbouring Hoshiarpur district where great damage to agricultural land is done by sandy torrents from the Siwalik range. In the afternoon I visited a village in the Jullundur district where holdings have been successfully consolidated, while my wife went through a programme of her own with Lady Glancy.

12. As you know we are off to Madras and the Central Provinces on the 18th February. We return to New Delhi on the afternoon of 2nd March.

13. Since above was drafted, I have received result[12] of Cabinet meeting on food imports, and have made a further counter-offensive.[13] I honestly believe we are heading for a very great disaster if His Majesty's Government refuse adequate imports.

14. Do you remember our once discussing at Bailiffscourt the evacuation of Britain by the Romans. Is there any readable book you know on the subject which gives any idea of what happened when the "Quit Britain" programme was adopted?

[11] 313-S of 14 February. L/E/8/3605. [12] See No. 378, note 6. [13] No. 382.

382

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *16 February 1944, 11.55 pm*
Received: 16 February, 10.30 pm

No. 332-S. Your No. 3891.[1] Imports of Foodgrains. I am sorry but I must return to the charge since I regard this as a matter of life or death for hundreds of thousands of Indians and one by which our good name in the world for justice and kindliness may be irretrievably ruined.

2. I note that His Majesty's Government recognises gravity of situation and appreciates work done by Government of India on food control and is now convinced that they are taking all measures at their command to deal with

situation. Decision of His Majesty's Government to refuse imports will however at one stroke[2] undo all work done by Government of India during last six months towards control of food and inflation and will make economic situation worse than ever before since confidence in Government will be finally destroyed.

3. It is not a matter of whether the rice crop is good or bad. Actually the good rice crop in Bengal will at least be balanced by a poor wheat harvest in Punjab where rains have been late and inadequate. But we can procure neither rice nor wheat in sufficient quantities or at reasonable prices unless growers and merchants believe that Government can control situation by imports and substantial reserve.

4. Wheat prices in Punjab recently fell considerably on report of arrival of one cargo of Australian wheat. My advisers believe and I am sure they are right that once it is known that no imports are available prices will rocket, growers will cease to bring to market and hoarding will begin everywhere (it will be impossible to conceal fact since all bodies are watching situation with greatest attention). In India with millions of small growers and inadequate administration it will be impossible to check this tendency by administrative action. Result will I fear be distress on far larger scale and over far wider area than in 1943 with effects on Eastern war, financial position, political situation and our reputation which you can judge.

5. It is of no use to wait for a month or two before approaching Americans. Critical time is now and does *not* depend on size of rice crop but on confidence or distrust of Government's ability to control situation. We are on eve of attempting to fix control price for wheat (and if possible rice) and whether we can do so depends on whether we have reserves at our command. If we have firm promise of, say, 500,000 tons within next six months I believe we can control situation. Without it I am sure we cannot. If therefore His Majesty's Government is unable to supply necessary tonnage I trust they will make immediate and insistent approach to Americans or will allow India to appeal to U.N.R.R.A. Every day's further delay is dangerous. Incidentally effect on market prices of imports of barley is far less than that of imports of wheat. Imports of wheat are required.

6. I entirely appreciate strategical situation and requirements of shipping but on long-term view situation I anticipate in India as result of your refusal of imports will surely do more harm to war effort and cause of Allied Nations and will retard victory to greater extent than sacrifice of necessary tonnage now. I do not think it is a choice between two gambles. I regard it as practical certainty that there will be large-scale disaster in India if imports are refused.

[1] See No. 378, note 6. [2] Decipher has 'at one stroke sooner or later undo'.

7. I believe that mere announcement of really substantial imports (500,000 tons in next six months is minimum) will have incalculable effect on morale and prices[3] and may make it unnecessary to ask for further imports on this scale in remainder of year. You may rest assured that we shall continue to make every effort to increase indigenous supplies of food and improve control. But without this immediate block of imports we shall fail.

8. I have discussed question with Commander-in-Chief and Supreme Commander from point of view of effect on war effort of cessation of imports and they both entirely support my view.

[3] 'prices' deciphered as '(? opinion)'.

383

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, Wavell Papers. Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6, p 14

MOST IMMEDIATE *16 February 1944*
PRIVATE

No. 333–S. Your telegram No. 152[1] of February 15th. Following personal and most secret for Prime Minister.

Many thanks for your message. I quite appreciate needs and difficulties of strategical situation but I feel so strongly that cessation of imports will cause first-class disaster in India that I have had to ask for reconsideration.

[1] No. 379.

384

Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten to Chiefs of Staff (via Air Ministry)

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 368

16 February 1944, 2.2 pm
Received: 17 February, 11 am

SEACOS 95. Following for Chiefs of Staff from Mountbatten.

The Viceroy has made clear to C.-in-C. India and myself the seriousness of the Indian food situation and is convinced that failure to provide adequate food imports will result in a worse famine than last year.

2. This cannot fail to have the most serious repercussions on India's war potential.

3. I fully realise how tight the shipping situation must be for OVERLORD[1] but would urge that the Viceroy's suggestion in his telegram No. 332–S[2] 16th February to the India Office of approaching the Americans for help should be considered without delay.

[1] Code name for the landing in Normandy in 1944. [2] No. 382.

385

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: f 74

PRIVATE *17 February 1944*

336–S. Your telegram 138[1] of 10th. Representative of Princes in War Cabinet.

2. I had it in my mind for some time past to invite Kashmir but as His Highness was without Prime Minister refrained from suggesting his name. He has however now appointed Sir B. N. Rau who is excellent choice and this objection has in consequence been removed. It is in fact possible that Rau will benefit by Maharaja's absence in early days of his tenure.

3. I agree that persons you mention should not accompany him if he accepts and in writing to him I am suggesting quite plainly that he will not need minister or private secretary at all.[2]

[1] No. 368.

[2] In tel. 214 of 1 March 1944, Mr Amery asked Lord Wavell whether he had reached a decision on a Princely representative for the War Cabinet. Mr Amery also considered, in view of the date on which Easter fell, that the Indian representatives should arrive between 11 and 17 April and that the Maharaja of Kashmir while not bringing a politically minded secretary should have an A.D.C. In tel. 472–S of 6 March, Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery that the Maharaja of Kashmir had accepted the appointment, which would be announced after it had been mentioned in Council on 8 March. L/PO/6/111 and L/P&J/8/562.

386

General Sir C. Auchinleck to Chiefs of Staff (via Air Ministry)

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 369

17 February 1944, 9.55 am
Received: 17 February, 2.15 pm

58587/COS. For Chiefs of Staff from General Auchinleck.

You should see Viceroy's 332–S[1] 16 Feb. to Secretary of State on the food situation in India. I am absolutely convinced that it is an urgent military

[1] No. 382.

necessity for food to be imported into this country as asked by the Viceroy. In my opinion it is as essential from point of view of future operations to stabilize food situation as it is to bring in reinforcements and equipment.

387

Mr Gandhi to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 175

DETENTION CAMP, *17 February 1944*

Dear Friend,

Although I have had not the pleasure of meeting you, I address you on purpose as 'dear friend'. I am looked upon by the representatives of the British Government as a great, if not the greatest enemy of the British. Since I regard myself as a friend and servant of humanity including the British, in token of my good will I call you, the foremost representative of the British in India, my 'friend'.

I have received, in common with some others, a notice[2] informing me, for the first time, why I am detained, and conferring on me the right of representation against my detention. I have duly sent my reply,[3] but I have as yet heard nothing from the Government. A reminder too has gone after a wait of thirteen days.

I have said some only have received notices, because, out of the six of us in this camp, only three have received them. I presume that all will receive them in due course. But my mind is filled with the suspicion that the notices have been sent as a matter of form only, and not with any intention to do justice. I do not wish to burden this letter with argument. I repeat, what I said in the correspondence[4] with your predecessor, that the Congress and I are wholly innocent of the charges brought against us. Nothing but an impartial tribunal to investigate the Government case, and the Congress case against the Government will bring out the truth.

The speeches[5] recently made on behalf of the Government in the Assembly on the release motion, and on the gagging order on Shri. Sarojini Devi, I consider to be playing with fire. I distinguish between defeat of Japanese arms and Allied victory. The latter must carry with it the deliverance of India from the foreign yoke. The spirit of India demands complete freedom from all foreign dominance and would therefore resist Japanese yoke equally with British or any other. The Congress represents that spirit in full measure. It has grown to be an institution whose roots have gone deep down into the Indian soil. I was therefore staggered to read that the Government were satisfied with things as they were going. Had they not got from among the Indian people

the men and money they wanted? Was not the Government machinery running smooth? This self-satisfaction bodes ill for Britain, India and the world, if it does not quickly give place to a searching of hearts in British high places.

Promises for the future are valueless in the face of the world struggle in which the fortune of all nations and therefore of the whole of humanity is involved. Present performance is the peremptory need of the moment if the war is to end in world peace and not be a preparation for another war bloodier than the present, if, indeed, there can be a bloodier. Therefore real war effort must mean satisfaction of India's demand. "Quit India" only gives vivid expression to that demand, and has not the sinister and poisonous meaning attributed to it without warrant by the Government of India. The expression is charged with the friendliest feeling for Britain in terms of the whole of humanity.

I have done. I thought that, if I claim to be a friend of the British, as I do, nothing should deter me from sharing my deepest thoughts with you. It is no pleasure for me to be in this camp, where all my creature comforts are supplied without any effort on my part, when I know that millions outside are starving for want of food. But I should feel utterly helpless if I went out and missed *the* food by which alone living becomes worth while.

I am yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 24 February 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State. Mr Gandhi's letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) p. 118 and in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 297–9.

[2] Annex 1 to No. 340. [3] No. 340.

[4] Vol. II, No. 553, Vol. III, Nos. 305, 353, 369 and 421 and No. 145 in this vol.

[5] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. 1, 1944, 7 and 8 February 1944, pp. 64–7, 110–15.

388

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 22nd Conclusions, Minute 1

R/30/1/4: ff 83–4

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 17 February 1944 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of item 1 were: Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr Thomas Johnston,

Mr Hugh Dalton, Mr H. U. Willink, Mr R. S. Hudson, Sir William Jowitt, Lord Portal, Major G. Lloyd George, Lord Cherwell, Sir Walter Womersley

Indian Food Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 19th Conclusions)[1]

At their meeting on the 7th February[2] the War Cabinet had considered the reply to be sent to the Viceroy about the Government of India's request for the continued importation of food grains. A reply on the lines approved by the War Cabinet had been despatched on the 15th February (No. 3891).[3]

THE PRIME MINISTER informed the War Cabinet that a further telegram had now been received from the Viceroy (No. 332–S[4] of the 16th February) strongly urging the reconsideration of the War Cabinet's decision.

The Prime Minister said that he thought the most convenient course would be for this telegram to be considered by the Committee consisting of the President of the Board of Education (in the absence of the Secretary of State for India), the Minister of Food, the Minister of War Transport and the Paymaster-General which had previously examined this question.

The War Cabinet—

Approved this suggestion, and asked that the Committee should consider this further telegram from the Viceroy, and submit a report for consideration on Monday, the 21st February.

[1] No. 378. [2] No. 358. [3] See No. 378, note 6. [4] No. 382.

389

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *17 February 1944*

Received: 9 March

I am afraid the War Cabinet's decision[1] has been a bad blow to you. I am sure Butler did his best at his conferences with the Ministers concerned and also at the War Cabinet, and I don't think I could have done any better. Nor was Winston at all unsympathetic. But he and the rest of the Cabinet apparently feel that every ship that they can possibly lay hold of is committed for months ahead to the military operations now in progress, and that even if the Americans had a few ships to spare—and they have so far steadily refused to admit that—there is no chance of persuading them to spare them until a desperate crisis has

actually arisen. That doesn't make good sense I know, but there it is. I suppose the best that can be said for it is that war is a gamble and that it is better to take the risk of a second famine in India than to risk the failure of the Second Front. Anyhow, you are left to sink or swim on your own and one can only hope that as in the Middle East four years ago you will come out on top. But I know how desperately anxious the whole position is and how if panic once gets hold what an uphill business it will be to get anything carried out.

2. I was reading last night Casey's letter[2] to you about the deliberate attempts to wreck the Bengal procurement scheme. It seems to me as if the only thing he can do is to be really tough with these mischief-makers and to shut up everybody who is guilty of advocating hoarding or otherwise trying to wreck the scheme.

3. I have got out of bed today for the first time and hope to be all right in a few days, though the doctors are likely to insist on my having to go down to Bailiffscourt for a week to get into good condition again.

4. I need not tell you that I am entirely in favour of your idea of an unofficial mission of Indian industrialists to visit this country. If I sent off a mark-time telegram[3] about it a day or so ago, it was only to make sure that the various Departments concerned at this end should be in the proper receptive mood. I have sent them letters warmly supporting the idea and hope to hear from them before many days that they are prepared to play up. It is, of course, possible that if these industrialists fix up big orders for plants here, there may have to be some delay, and some working out of priorities when hostilities end. I see in that no objection to your people fixing up things early if they want to. In any case it will be all to the good if they can make their arrangements here rather than in America, not only from the point of view of their not off-loading sterling on to the outside market, but even more important from the point of view of subsequent extensions and repairs.

PS.—I have just seen your further telegram[4] and have sent an urgent appeal to Winston offering to fly over to U.S.A. and put the dope before the President.

[1] No. 378. [2] No. 345. [3] 156 of 15 February. L/E/8/3605. [4] No. 382.

390

Minutes by Mr Amery and Mr Churchill[1]

R/30/1/4: ff 72–4

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *18 February 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 5/44.

Prime Minister

Indian Finance Membership

The Cabinet asked[2] Anderson and myself to consider whether there was any suitable European available for this appointment or whether we would recommend an extension for Raisman.

Anderson has suggested Donald Gordon. He is a Scot, settled in Canada, aged 43. He was Deputy Governor of the Bank of Canada from 1938 to 1941, having joined the staff of the Bank in 1935. In 1941 he was appointed by the Canadian Government to be Price Controller and has since been on leave from the Bank.

Enquiries made through the Governor of the Bank and the United Kingdom High Commissioner have resulted in favourable reports, of which I attach copies.[3] He is very highly spoken of in knowledgeable Canadian circles and his present post is political. He is said to be vigorous, courageous and able. I attach a copy of Malcolm Macdonald's letter[4] about him.

The Viceroy is strongly opposed[5] to the appointment of a Canadian who has no public reputation outside Canada, especially following immediately on Casey's appointment. He says that such an appointment would be strongly criticised and would cause him the most serious difficulties with his Executive Council. He adds that he sincerely trusts this suggestion will not be pursued.

I am quite convinced that we cannot force Wavell to accept Gordon against his judgment, especially in view of the position about Foodgrains Imports of which you are aware. Moreover it is very doubtful if Gordon could be spared by Mackenzie King and almost certain that he could not be available by April 8th when the vacancy arises.

In these circumstances the Chancellor and I have agreed to recommend an

[1] Mr Turnbull sent Mr Amery's Minute to Mr Martin on 19 February with a covering letter explaining that Sir J. Anderson was opposed to the formal circulation to the Cabinet of a paper referring to Mr Gordon as a possible candidate for the Finance membership. Sir John had suggested that Mr Churchill should report the Conclusion orally to the Cabinet if he approved it. Mr Turnbull remarked that the selection of persons for appointment to these posts was not usually brought to the Cabinet, but had come up on the last occasion on the issue whether the appointment should now go to an Indian. He added that Sir J. Anderson had concurred in the Minute. R/30/1/4.

[2] No. 304. [3] Not printed. [4] Not printed.

[5] See No. 333, para. 3 and No. 334, note 5. Mr Amery had sent Sir J. Anderson copies of the further tels. referred to in No. 334, note 5 in a letter of 24 January. L/PO/8/52b.

extension of Raisman for 1 year. Raisman has produced a good budget with strong anti-inflationary measures and Wavell speaks in increasingly high terms of him and of his handling of his Indian colleagues. The Chancellor considers that Gordon should be further considered for appointment at the end of Raisman's extension and to this I willingly agree.

If you accept this suggestion the conclusion should no doubt be reported to the Cabinet in view of their previous decision.

L. S. AMERY

Yes Raisman

W. S. C.

20.2.

391

War Cabinet

Committee on Indian Food Grain Requirements. Paper I.F.R. (44) 4[1]

L/E/8/3323: f 364

REPORT

INDIA OFFICE, *19 February 1944*

The War Cabinet at their meeting on the 17th February, 1944 (W.M. (44) 22nd Conclusions, Minute 1)[2] instructed the Committee on Indian Food Grain Requirements to consider telegram No. 332–S[3] from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India on the Indian food situation, and to submit a report for their consideration on Monday, the 21st February.

2. The Committee met on the 18th February.[4] They are impressed by the insistence with which the Viceroy urges the case for some further degree of assistance to the Indian food-grains position. It is clear to them, however, that the essential difficulty in this matter is the provision of the requisite shipping, and that this holds good whether the requisite tonnage is found by His Majesty's Government or whether one of the Viceroy's alternative suggestions is pursued, namely, that a minimum of 500,000 tons should be obtained from the United States over the next 6 months or that India should directly approach U.N.R.R.A.

3. They were informed by the Minister of War Transport that, so far as he could judge, it would be out of the question to make shipping available on the scale necessary for imports of the order desired by the Viceroy, since shipping could be made available in fact only at the cost of (*a*) a further serious inroad

[1] This Report was also circulated as War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 118. [2] No. 388.
[3] No. 382. [4] The minutes of this meeting (I.F.R. (44) 2nd Meeting) are on L/E/8/3323.

into the British import programme, or (*b*) an interference with operational plans.

4. The Minister of War Transport indicated his readiness to assist in the final consideration of this problem by analysing the effect on United Kingdom imports of the diversion of shipping that would be necessary, and to see that this analysis would be made available to those responsible for the respective aspects.

5. The Committee, impressed as they are by the importance of giving some supplementary assistance if possible to the Government of India, even if assistance on the scale desired by the Viceroy should not be practicable, have considered alternative methods of securing this. They are of opinion that the only way of continuing assistance lies in a further diversion to India of shipments of food grains destined for the Balkan stock pile in the Middle East; this might amount to 50,000 tons. The Committee realise that this is a matter which must be left for consideration by the War Cabinet, in the light of earlier Cabinet conclusions on this subject, and that United States reactions to the proposal would have to be ascertained.

6. They also think that there would be advantage if ships carrying military or civil cargo from Australia and the United States to India could also take a quantity of bagged wheat, having regard to the psychological effect of the unloading of bagged wheat from such cargoes at the various ports.

7. The Committee endorse the suggestion of the Paymaster-General that the Viceroy should be invited to consider to what extent skilful publicity can be used to magnify the effect of such supplies of food grains including barley as can be made available.

8. They recommend that the Government of India should be asked to give the fullest consideration to the utilisation to the utmost advantage of such supplies of barley as will be made available from Iraq.

9. Consideration was given to the Viceroy's proposal to make an appeal to U.N.R.R.A. It was agreed that the policy of His Majesty's Government has hitherto been that the British Empire should not come within the sphere of U.N.R.R.A. activities. Moreover, since U.N.R.R.A. is not in a position to provide shipping, such an appeal could only be useful or otherwise by its indirect effect.

10. The Chairman stated that any diversion of shipping from operational purposes did not lie within the competence of the Committee, but it was clear that that possibility must be considered elsewhere.

11. The India Office, while welcoming any continuation of shipments of grain to India on whatever scale, feel it necessary to emphasise that the above

proposals can only go a small way towards meeting the urgent requests of the Viceroy and of the Government of India.

(Signed on behalf of the Committee),

R. A. B.

392

Government of India, Home Department to Secretary of State

Express Letter, L/P&J/8/618B: ff 153–5

MOST SECRET NEW DELHI, *19 February 1944*

In the Preface to the pamphlet *Congress Responsibility for the Disturbances, 1942–43*[1] it was stated that it did not purport to disclose all the information in the possession of the Government and that there was a large volume of evidence which it was undesirable to publish at present. From August 1942 onwards the Intelligence Organisations of the Central and Provincial Governments were engaged in collecting evidence of Congress responsibility from every possible source and a year later the volume of this evidence had become so large as to make it most difficult to appreciate it as a whole. It was therefore decided to select an independent and judicially-minded officer and place him on special duty both to marshal the evidence and present it in a connected and readable form and also to report how far, in his opinion, the unpublished material corroborated the conclusions reached in the pamphlet and how far the whole body of evidence established the responsibility of Congress. The officer selected was Mr. Wickenden, I.C.S., a Judge in the Central Provinces, and a copy of his Report,[2] which was completed on November 29th, 1943, is enclosed herewith. The evidence on which, after much sifting, Mr. Wickenden decided to rely and which has therefore been quoted in the margin of his Report, is being printed and a copy of it will be forwarded as soon as possible.

2. Mr. Wickenden was not asked to make recommendations for action, nor was he supplied with the various representations received from Mr. Gandhi[3] in answer to the charges against him and the Congress. It was hoped, however, that his Report would help us to decide what our next step should be, and that hope has been realised. We regard the Report as a most valuable and important document which has brought together a mass of disconnected material and

[1] Cmd. 6430.

[2] A copy of this Report and the evidence on which it was based is on L/P&J/8/618B.

[3] See Vol. II, Nos. 553 and 779, Vol. III, Nos. 305, 353, 369 and 421 and Nos. 51 note 1, and 188 in this Vol.; also *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944).

given it significance as a whole. We have considered the advisability of prosecuting the Congress leaders under section 121A of the Indian Penal Code,[4] or, in the alternative, of setting up some kind of judicial tribunal which would examine and report on the whole case, including of course any defence that the Congress leaders might wish to make. For reasons that will be explained below, we have reached the conclusion that neither of these courses would be desirable. The events to which Mr. Wickenden's Report relates will, however, loom large in Indian history. It is also possible that our action against the Congress leaders or the correctness of the policy of His Majesty's Government in supporting that action may at any time be challenged either in the Courts or in some wider way, whether in India or outside. From both these points of view it is of prime importance that our case should be complete and we are therefore taking steps to secure such additional evidence as is possible to fill in the gaps that Mr. Wickenden has pointed out in various paragraphs of his Report. It is conceivable, although we think unlikely, that further evidence may come to light which would justify a reconsideration of our conclusion.

3. The outstanding conclusions at which Mr. Wickenden has arrived, and which we accept, are that the movement (or rebellion) contemplated by Mr. Gandhi was one of the kind that actually took place; that it was planned beforehand, so far as there was time to do so; and that Mr. Gandhi was to a large extent aware of those plans. This is the case on which a prosecution would have to be based. The advantages of a successful prosecution would be that it would establish beyond doubt the guilt of the accused persons and also that the sentences imposed would presumably enable us to keep them in custody for such period as we might think desirable after the disappearance of the law under which they are at present detained. It goes without saying that an unsuccessful prosecution would be disastrous and that the best legal advice would therefore be necessary before pursuing this proposal. In view of the conclusion we have reached, we have not consulted our own legal advisers; but from the broader point of view mentioned at the end of the preceding paragraph you may, perhaps, think it desirable to place the case before the law officers of the Crown.

4. There are several reasons that have influenced our decision. Mr. Wickenden has taken the view that Mr. Gandhi's movement was not intended to assist Japanese operations against this country. He may not, perhaps, have given full weight to the nature of the acts in which the rebellion manifested itself or to the localities especially selected. These factors, however, do no more than raise a suspicion that there may have been some definite intention of facilitating a Japanese invasion of India. There is no direct evidence on the point; and we must consider what the effect of a successful prosecution would be in the eyes of the world if it could not be established that the deliberate object of the rebellion was to help the enemy.

5. Mr. Gandhi's motives could be discussed at great length; but it is at least possible that the desire to save India from the horrors of warfare carried even greater weight with him than the desire for independence which Mr. Wickenden regards as his dominating motive. There can be little doubt that, with the examples of Malaya and Burma before him, Mr. Gandhi believed that the British would not be able to repel a Japanese invasion of India and at that time he probably also doubted whether the Allies would ultimately win the war in the West. He may, therefore, have been convinced that after having turned India into a battle-field and exposed it to devastation, the British would ultimately leave India to the mercy of the Japanese as a conquered country. If this happened, he himself would be powerless and his dreams and promises of *Swaraj* would be at an end. Against this prospect it may have seemed to him better and more in the interests of India that almost any internal chaos should arise in the country rather than that India should go down with the sinking ship without a chance of acting for herself. His view may well have been that, if India could only stand alone, the Congress, as the predominant Indian Party, could make overtures to the Japanese in order to secure a position of neutrality, in which event the Japanese would have no reason to attack Indian territory. Some such idea as this may also have been at the back of his rejection of the Cripps Offer. He saw no advantage in linking India's destinies with an Allied victory which he regarded as doubtful and thus involving India in what he believed to be a certainty of invasion for the sake of long term promises which might not be fulfilled. Failing to secure satisfaction from Sir Stafford Cripps he resolved in the presence of the Japanese threat to take advantage of the opportunity of shaking off the British domination—whether by agreement with the British Government or otherwise—in order that India might be left to work out her own salvation. He did not want the Japanese in India or to obtain independence with their help if it could be avoided. But if it came to the worst the Japanese would probably give more favourable terms to the Congress if it had openly disavowed allegiance to the Allied cause.

6. It is true that motive does not enter into the offence created by section 121A, I.P.C. It is also true that anyone who gambles on his own judgment of the course of future events must, like every loser, be prepared to pay the penalty if his judgment turns out to be wrong. Nevertheless, a defence of this kind would certainly reduce the criminality of the act and the verdict of the world, and of History, on a conviction obtained in spite of it might well place Mr. Gandhi and his followers in the category of misguided patriots rather than

[4] Section 121A of the Indian Penal Code (Act XLV of 1860 as amended) provided sentences of transportation for life or a shorter term, imprisonment for a maximum of ten years, or a fine against anyone guilty of conspiracy to wage war against the Queen, abetting in the waging of such war, attempting to deprive the Queen of the Sovereignty of British India, or conspiring 'to overawe, by means of criminal force or the show of criminal force'.

of deliberate traitors. Added to that is the fact that a public trial, quite apart from the labour and expense that it would entail, would inevitably create world-wide interest and might well stir popular feeling in this country to a dangerous pitch. It is no doubt with that object in view that Mr. Gandhi and his supporters have recently been demanding that very course. It would be possible to postpone a trial until the end of the war; but that course would tend to complicate the post-war constitutional discussions and introduce a disturbing factor at a time when a peaceful atmosphere would be particularly desirable.

7. As compared with a trial, the advantages of a judicial enquiry (and by this we do not mean an enquiry into the whole course of the rebellion, but an investigation by a tribunal consisting of one or more distinguished Judges of the case for and against the Congress leaders) would be, in the first place, that it would dispose of any accusation of vindictiveness or desire to punish and secondly, that it would permit the presentation of a wider range of evidence than would be admissible in a regular trial. The pronouncement of such a tribunal would be only one degree less authoritative than that of a court of law. In other respects the proposal would be open to much the same objections as those urged against a prosecution. It would be difficult to hold the enquiry entirely *in camera*. We do not, therefore, recommend this course.

8. Unless you wish to reconsider or alter our conclusions, we remain committed to our present course of action, namely to keep the Congress leaders in detention until the war is won or until satisfactory assurances are forthcoming. We should have to pursue that course in the knowledge that, if there is no change in the attitude of these persons, they will ultimately obtain their liberty without any established blot on their character. There is, of course, considerable pressure from different quarters even now to release Mr. Gandhi and his colleagues and agitation to that end is likely to continue. On the other hand, there must be a large volume of public opinion, both in India and abroad, which recognises the strength of the Government's case, and we ourselves are convinced, in the light of the whole previous record of the Congress and our knowledge of Mr. Gandhi's tactics, that release without the most binding assurances would be a danger to the successful prosecution of the war. We are, therefore, content to go on as at present, relying on Mr. Wickenden's Report and any further evidence that we may collect as a convincing defence against any challenge to our action that may arise.

R. TOTTENHAM
Additional Secretary to the Government of India

393

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 23rd Conclusions, Minute 6

R/30/1/4: ff 69–71

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 21 February 1944 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of item 6 were: Mr S. M. Bruce, Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr R. A. Butler, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Charles Portal, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke

INDIA

Food Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W. M. (44) 22nd Conclusions, Minute 1).[1]

At their meeting on the 17th February the War Cabinet had had before them a further telegram, dated the 16th February,[2] from the Viceroy about the Government of India's request for the continued importation of food grain, and had agreed that this telegram should be considered by the Committee, consisting of the President of the Board of Education (in the absence of the Secretary of State for India), the Minister of Food, the Minister of War Transport and the Paymaster-General, which had previously examined this question, with a view to the submission of a report for consideration by the War Cabinet on Monday, the 21st February, 1944.

The War Cabinet now had before them the Committee's report (W.P. (44) 118).[3] The Committee, while impressed by the insistence with which the Viceroy urged the case for some further degree of assistance to the Indian Food Grain position, were clear that the difficulty was the provision of the requisite shipping. The information available to them was that shipping on the scale necessary could not be made available, save at a cost of a further dangerous inroad into the British import programme or a serious interference with operational plans. The Committee had considered alternative methods of assisting the Viceroy and recommended consideration of the following:

(*a*) a further diversion to India of the shipments of food grains destined for the Balkan stockpile in the Middle East. This might amount to 50,000 tons, but would need War Cabinet approval, while United States reactions would also have to be ascertained;

[1] No. 388. [2] No. 382. [3] See No. 391, note 1.

(*b*) there would be advantage if ships carrying military or civil cargo from the United States or Australia to India could also take a quantity of bagged wheat;
(*c*) the Viceroy should be asked to consider to what extent skilful publicity could be used to magnify the effect of such supplies of food grains as could be made available;
(*d*) the Government of India should be asked to use to the fullest advantage such supplies of barley as would be made available from Iraq, probably 50,000 tons.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION reviewed the recommendations made by the Committee, and added that any diversion of shipping from operational purposes did not lie within the Committee's competence and would have to be considered elsewhere.

It was suggested that, in view of the opinions[4] expressed by the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Supreme Commander, South-East Asia Command, as to the military importance of maintaining adequate supplies of food grains for India, enquiry should be made of the Viceroy as to what military stores now under order for India those Commanders would be prepared to sacrifice with a view to the space so made available being used for the shipment of wheat. It was made plain that room could not be found for consignments of wheat to India except at the expense of other cargo, as all ships sailing to India were fully loaded.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT informed the War Cabinet that he had further examined the position. He was impressed by the Government of India's reluctance to accept barley if that could be avoided. He felt now, after consultation with the Middle East Supply Centre, that the right course would be to abandon the proposed despatch of 50,000 tons of Iraqi barley to India. That barley could be usefully absorbed in the Middle East. In that event, he could now undertake to provide shipping for the shipment to India, in its place, of 50,000 tons of wheat. Any such arrangement would be entirely independent of the suggestion that a contribution of 50,000 tons of food grains should be obtained from the Balkan stockpile.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION expressed his readiness to accept the proposal of the Minister of War Transport.

After further discussion, the War Cabinet agreed as follows:—

(1) The proposal to ship 50,000 tons of barley from Iraq should be abandoned.
(2) 50,000 tons of wheat should be provided for India in place of the Iraqi barley.
(3) The proposal to divert approximately 50,000 tons of food grains now *en route* from Australia for the Balkan stockpile to India should not be proceeded with.

(4) The Viceroy should be asked to report what military stores he, the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Supreme Commander, South-East Asia Command, would be prepared to see removed from cargoes scheduled for India with a view to their replacement in those cargoes by bagged wheat.
(5) A draft telegram to the Viceroy embodying these conclusions of the War Cabinet should be prepared by the President of the Board of Education and submitted to the Prime Minister.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION said that he ought to make it clear that the Secretary of State for India, on his return, might wish to raise the general question of India's future food grain requirements.

[4] See Nos. 384 and 386.

394

Government of Bombay, Home Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/622: f 38

EN CLAIR BOMBAY, *22 February 1944, 8.15 pm*
Received: 22 February, 9.30 pm

Mrs. Gandhi passed away 19.35 hours this evening.

395

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

EN CLAIR NEW DELHI, *22 February 1944, 7 pm*
Received: 23 February, 2.15 pm

No. 384-S. Following *en clair* telegram received from Jam Sahib. Comments will follow:—

Begins. Grateful submitting following message urgently to His Excellency Crown Representative:—

"Grave concern among States generally that Attachment of States Bill being pushed without eliciting and considering opinion of States. Having regard to views of Standing Committee on this question recently communicated[1] to His Excellency and Political Adviser which I as Chancellor fully endorse and commend for immediate and earnest consideration solicit courageous and

[1] No. 350.

farsighted statesmanship expected of His Excellency by ensuring that the Bill may not be passed finally by Parliament or presented for Royal assent unless States views elicited and considered by His Majesty and His Majesty's Government. In view special nature of relationship between the Crown and the States earnestly solicit that further action regarding attachment be suspended till possibilities of suitable settlement founded on consent are explored through negotiations between His Excellency and his Representatives with Representatives of Princes. This course further enjoined in view decision Ajmer Tribunal[2] and the belief expressed by the Standing Committee which I share that objective in view can be ensured through suitable alternatives founded on consent which do not impair existing sovereign rights and privileges of Rulers concerned or integrity of their States or continuance of ruling dynasties. Princes rely on His Excellency and Crown Department to assist towards satisfactory settlement of this question without delay through negotiation and agreement. For this purpose and without prejudice to issues involved Standing Committee have requested that in the meantime at least in case of 22 States whose Rulers entitled to vote for election of Representative Members of Chamber of Princes except where they may have freely consented to new arrangement the *status quo ante* 16th April 1943 be maintained and in particular at least for purpose of co-operation on war measures as regards distribution of commodities, etc. In view authoritative declaration[3] of His Majesty's Government reiterating that Parliament cannot legislate for territories and subjects of Indian States and with view to avoid further legal and other complications strongly urge that States be given opportunity of examining implications of proposed legislation and of communicating their views for consideration His Majesty and his Government and of the Crown Representative before Bill enacted item [into?] law. I venture to invite His Excellency's personal support in this matter with a view to assisting him in finding an agreed and satisfactory solution which is desirable and does not seem difficult to achieve. His Excellency's response to this request will be treated by the States as the first earnest of the much needed and most welcome announcement[4] in his first address to Central Legislature that due account shall be taken of the interests of those who have stood loyally by the Crown in this war and all other times. I am further desired to request that these views may also be cabled to the Secretary of State for India and submitted to His Imperial Majesty the King-Emperor with whom the Princes are attached in loyalty and devotion and whose solicitude and solemn assurances are their sheet anchor. Digvijaysinghji, Chancellor, Chamber of Princes." *Ends.*

[2] This appears to refer to the judgment mentioned in No. 264, note 2. The Judicial Commissioner to the Western India and Gujarat States Agencies was also Judicial Commissioner of Ajmer-Merwara.

[3] See e.g. Cmd. 4843, Nos. 6 and 7, and *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 298, 27 February 1935, col. 1211.

[4] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. 1, 1944, 17 February 1944, p. 341.

396

The Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawanagar to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

Telegram, L/P&S/13/974: f 140

22 February 1944, 5.40 pm
Received: 22 February, 9.30 pm

254–G.T. Continuation my detailed telegram dated twentieth February.[2] I have just seen text of States Attachment Bill published in *Times of India* as A.P.I. message. This text if correct raises issues of vital implication to States in general as also for the States proposed to be attached which request fullest consideration and close examination. There [? These] further emphasise necessary (? ity) of withholding final passage of bill till opinion of States invited and considered.

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 24 February 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.
[2] See No. 395; the date should be 21 February.

397

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: ff 352–3

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *23 February 1944, 4.15 am*
SECRET

4545. War Cabinet have again considered[1] your request for imports of food grains. They had before them your telegram 332–S[2] and telegrams 58587 COS[3] from Auchinleck and SECOS 95.[4]

2. War Cabinet fully recognise seriousness of Indian position and of considerations you have so strongly urged. The hard fact is that nothing of the order of one million tons a year or of half that amount in six months can be shipped without gravest repercussions on operational plans of first magnitude in regard to which we are committed to the United States and Russia. We cannot withdraw these commitments without most serious consequences both political and strategic. Minister of War Transport is satisfied that United States also have no shipping not already fully committed to operational and other essential purposes, and he has advised that approach to United States for shipments of substantial size would be a completely hopeless enterprise unless it

[1] No. 393. [2] No. 382. [3] No. 386. [4] No. 384.

were founded on a situation in which demonstrable shortage can be shown to exist.

3. It was not thought that an approach to U.N.R.R.A. on this issue would provide a solution since U.N.R.R.A. is not in a position to provide any shipping.

4. War Cabinet have considered most carefully what they can do to help you with our own shipping not pledged to operational purposes or to United Kingdom import programme which is already cut to lowest possible limit. Minister of War Transport has reviewed all possibilities and is making special arrangements to ship 50,000 tons of wheat from Australia. This will be in substitution for barley proposed to be sent under paragraph 4 of my telegram 3891[5] of 15th February in view of your statement that barley imports have much less effect on Indian prices than wheat imports. Thus present rate of shipments will in effect continue for further month though arrivals will be spread over March and April.

5. Only other possibility is that ships earmarked to carry military stores scheduled for India should be partly made available to carry food grains. This would obviously have adverse repercussions on plans for operations based on India. In view however of telegrams from Mountbatten and Auchinleck Cabinet would be glad if you would confer with them and report what military stores you and they would be prepared to see removed from military import programme for India this year with a view to their replacement either by part cargoes of bagged wheat or whole cargoes of wheat. Cabinet will be prepared to consider this possibility further in light of your and Mountbatten's recommendation. The use of this shipping would require United States concurrence and in view of importance they attach to maintaining minimum essential military imports, it is doubtful whether amounts provided in this way would be sufficient to justify formal public announcement. Suggestion was however made in course of Cabinet's discussions that though imports of the order you desire are not possible there would be some chance of holding situation if skilful publicity were given to frequent arrivals of even comparatively small amounts. Idea is that by including small quantities of bagged wheat on as many as possible of the ships carrying military stores more or less continuous flow of small imports could be maintained over long period which would help to maintain confidence.

[5] See No. 378, note 6.

398

The Nawab of Bhopal to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&S/13/974: f 93

CLEAR LINE *23 February 1944*

I am receiving telegrams of protests from many States all over India against the proposed Attachment of States Bill. I am also being asked to intervene and take immediate action. My position is extremely difficult. I have no knowledge of the details of the case nor am I yet in a position to move officially nor am I fully aware of the views of the bigger States and of the Government of India but as Chancellor Designate I am being pressed to take action. I therefore appeal to Your Excellency to help me out of my present difficulty by having the Bill postponed for at least three months and allowing me time to examine the proposition dispassionately and with a view to suggesting if possible solution of the difficulty in a manner which will both help Your Excellency's Government and safeguard the interests rights and position of all the States. Apparently the Bill in its present form may affect adversely the States [?status] and position of all the States and is likely to give rise to grave dissatisfaction and disappointment and cause grave apprehension in the minds of most of the Princes. This should in my judgement be avoided at all cost. I leave the rest in Your Excellency's hands and shall be grateful for any guidance you may give me in this matter.

399

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *24–25 February 1944*

Received: 9 March

I have only just read the full text of your speech[1] last week. I thought it quite first rate and can only hope that it made some impression on your hearers and upon the saner minds in India. Otherwise the reception by the Indian Press has been the typically querulous denunciation from each section for not giving them the particular thing they are clamouring for. It requires a wonderful lot of faith to go on believing that political India is not as silly as it sometimes seems. But I think we must go on believing it and hoping that one of these days they will really face realities, including not only the internal geography of

[1] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. 1, 1944, 17 February 1944, pp. 337–44.

India but India's relation, geographically and otherwise, to the world surrounding it.

2. I also enjoyed the introduction to your anthology.[2] I agree that there is nothing passes the time so well either when sleepless, or in physical discomfort, or inclined to get impatient over immediate troubles, as quoting poetry to oneself. In my case I find it very difficult to remember much English poetry, I imagine because when reading it I have absorbed the sense too easily without thinking of the individual words. On the other hand poetry in any other language has involved more definite concentration on the actual words and has therefore stuck more easily. I imagine I could quote from memory at least ten times as much Latin or Greek poetry as English, not to speak of a certain amount of stray German, French and Italian poetry, with even odds and ends of Russian, Yugoslav and Persian.

3. You will be relieved, as indeed will poor Raisman himself, at knowing that he is to be prolonged for a year. I imagine when he gets through his budget it might be quite a good thing for him to come home and discuss the sterling balance situation with the Cabinet's Indian Finance Committee. Incidentally that might give him a little leave as well.

F[inance] M[ember]
would like to go
about mid-May to mid-July.
W.

4. The more I think over the sterling balance business the more it seems to me that we have created, without quite knowing it, a most powerful instrument of Empire unity. India as a big holder of these balances is obviously interested in sterling retaining its value and in the maintenance of the sterling area so that she can buy freely and easily, not only from this country but from other parts of the sterling area. It seems to me that, as compared with our common interest in the business, the question whether these balances should continue to earn one per cent. or be funded at three per cent., or whether India might make some greater eventual contribution to the cost of the war than is involved in the Defence Agreement is a relatively minor matter. The one thing that I trust we shall not do is to weaken the sterling area by toying with any of these fancy Anglo-American schemes for some new world monetary system tied up with gold. Similarly, while the sterling area itself constitutes in some measure a preferential system, its effectiveness will obviously be greatly enhanced if it is supported by other forms of preference. I know of course how touchy Indian Nationalist feeling is at this moment about Empire Preference and that question must obviously wait, so far as India is concerned, until the inferiority complex has worn off sufficiently to enable her to realise the practical advantages.

5. The last development of the Food Grains position registers a slight improvement. It is at any rate something that there is to be an opportunity

for direct discussion between you and Mountbatten to see how far there is anything he can spare from his operational requirements in the next few months that might afford cargo space for wheat. I won't say more, for I know what a burden of anxiety the whole thing is throwing on your shoulders.

[Para. 6, enclosing a letter from Lord Aberdare on recreation, omitted.]

[2] *Other Men's Flowers. An Anthology of Poetry Compiled by A. P. Wavell* (Jonathan Cape, London, 1944).

400

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Gandhi[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 174

NAGPUR, *25 February 1944*

Dear Mr. Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter of February 17th.[2]

You will by now have received the reply[3] to your representation.[4] I am sorry to hear that three of those in the Aga Khan's palace with you have not received notices. This will be looked into at once.

I expect you have seen in the papers reports of the speech[5] I made to the Legislature on the same day on which you wrote your letter. This states my point of view and I need not repeat what I said then. I enclose a copy for your convenience if you wish to read it.

I take this opportunity to express to you deep sympathy from my wife and myself at the death of Mrs Gandhi; we understand what this loss must mean to you after so many years of companionship.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 2 March 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State. Lord Wavell's letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) p. 119.

[2] No. 387. [3] Annex 2 to No. 340. [4] No. 340. [5] See No. 399, note 1.

401

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, NAGPUR, *25 February 1944*

My last letter to you was dated 15th February.[1] I set off for Madras on 18th and could only have caught the bag of 24th by writing again so soon that there

[1] No. 381.

would have been no fresh news to give you. This letter will, I hope, catch the bag of 28th February.

2. I have just received your letter of 10th/11th February.[2] I have no direct news of how you are getting on, but from recent telegrams it seems that you are doing some work again. I hope to hear soon that you are quite recovered.

3. My address[3] to the Legislature on 17th February met with the reception I expected. There was not a good word for it in the Congress newspapers, whose editors pin their faith to the unconditional release of the leaders. *Dawn* and the other Muslim League newspapers protested violently against my reference to the geographical unity of India, and *Dawn* produced a cartoon of me extracting a dead rat (or mouse) from my mental hand bag. The home Press seems to have reacted more favourably, and I know Joyce did his best to get editorial comment on to helpful lines. I think on the whole that I was as progressive as is possible in the present unhelpful position of policies and parties.

4. The Kathiawar Attachment Bill seems to have given Munster a little trouble in the House of Lords, and you will doubtless have a good deal more in the House of Commons. I am awaiting Wylie's advice on the Jam Saheb's protest which was telegraphed[4] to you, and I have before me a similar protest from Bhopal.[5] I do not see how legislation can now be postponed, and shall telegraph to you as soon as Wylie, who is on tour, has seen the drafts prepared by the Political Department and advised me on them.

5. Your telegram[6] communicating to me the Cabinet's decision[7] on my counter-offensive[8] about food imports is not encouraging. I have telegraphed again[9] pointing out how foolish it is to wait until people are starving before beginning to import; and that to expect me to hold the critical food situation here with empty hands is stupid and shortsighted. Copies of these telegrams have gone to Auchinleck and Mountbatten, and by the time I get back to New Delhi on 2nd March they should be ready to tell me how far they can accept the Cabinet's proposal that a part of the shipping space available for the movement of military stores to India should be allotted to foodgrains. I do not expect much from this.

I see from your letter that that old menace and fraud the Professor was called in to advise against me. The fact is that the P. M. has calculated his war plans without any consideration at all of India's needs; I am afraid that he may be courting a first-class disaster to the Empire, unless we are very lucky.

6. I am glad that it has finally been decided to offer Raisman an extension. I still think that it would have been best to appoint an Indian, but failing that the right course was to extend Raisman, unless His Majesty's Government could find a man of real eminence from the United Kingdom to replace him. Raisman has his faults, but there is no doubt about his ability and he is good

both in Council and in the Assembly. I am telegraphing[10] to you agreeing that he may go home on duty for a couple of months this summer, and letting you know that during this short absence Jones could suitably act for him. Jones, as you probably know, was formerly Financial Secretary in Madras, and had had no training in high finance before he came to the Government of India. But Raisman tells me that he has since acquired a remarkable all-round knowledge of finance and of the working of the Finance Department, and he has every confidence in him. I do not suggest that Jones would be suitable for anything but a temporary vacancy. If Raisman goes to London within the next few weeks you will be able to discuss with him your views about economic planning. It seems to me that international talks on post-war economics and even talks between His Majesty's Government and the Dominions and India must resolve themselves into an attempt to reconcile conflicting ideas which are not really capable of reconciliation. Thus, India is most unlikely to agree to any tariff policy which limits her right to protect new industries. Australia, South Africa and New Zealand will take much the same line, while His Majesty's Government and Canada may differ. When we discussed the effect of international economic planning on our own reconstruction plans in the Reconstruction Committee of Council, Mudaliar quite sensibly remarked that it was no use speculating on, or waiting for, the results of economic talks and that our proper course was to make up our own minds what we wanted, and to do our best to get it. In planning for ourselves we should have to assume that things would go more or less as we wished.

7. In the last paragraph of your letter of 10th/11th February you mention your discussion with Knollys. He stayed with us in New Delhi and I had a talk with him about the future of Civil Aviation, and the employment of Indian Air Crews. He adopted at first the attitude you mention, but before he left I think he fully recognised the weight of Indian opinion on this question.

8. The Madras tour was strenuous but interesting. We flew from New Delhi non-stop to Madras in about 7 hours, and stayed at Guindy from the 18th to the morning of the 22nd February. I saw something of the rationing system in the city and suburbs, which seemed to be working very well. Firewood is at the moment a bigger problem than rice, but Hope seemed to think that with the arrival of adequate supplies (a large Government depôt has just been established) the problem would be solved. My wife had a fairly heavy programme of visits to Welfare Centres, Canteens and Hospitals, and we both inspected a parade of the Civil Defence Services. I had the usual long list of interviews. On the morning of 22nd February the Governor and I left for Coimbatore and Madura, and returned to Madras on the afternoon of the 23rd.

[2] No. 371. [3] See No. 399, note 1. [4] No. 395. [5] No. 398. [6] No. 397.
[7] No. 393. [8] No. 382. [9] No. 402. [10] 48–S.C. of 26 February. L/PO/8/52b.

In both the districts visited the people seemed prosperous and friendly, and the rationing arrangements were again adequate. At Madura I saw a very interesting Rural housing scheme which a leading British firm of mill-owners had started for some of its workers, the first time I have seen Indian labour well housed and living up to a decent standard.

On the 24th we flew to Vizagapatam where I saw the rationing scheme and some villages, and went round the harbour. Conditions in the villages are much poorer here in the Telugu country than they are in the Tamil districts in the South. All the same, the District Officers seemed to have the food situation pretty well in hand. I was taken to one village where out of about 500 males, 287 were serving in the Army; the remainder seemed to be all army pensioners or boys anxious to join up. I was favourably impressed by Madras, and Hope certainly has a very thorough knowledge of the Province and its Officers. He has toured incessantly and spoken at almost every considerable place in the Province, and the people everywhere seemed glad to see him.

9. I had three interviews of some importance at Madras. The first was with Rajagopalachari with whom I spent 45 minutes. I told him very frankly that I could see little hope of political progress as long as the Congress Leaders persisted in their present attitude. I believed that the vast bulk of the people in India were not seriously dissatisfied with the present Government, and that we were getting out of the country all the help both in material and in manpower that could reasonably be expected. I was most anxious to secure a political settlement, but I was quite content to wait for it if necessary. If the Congress Leaders would not play, it seemed to me that the only way of making progress was to bring into the existing Government men of real eminence who either already possessed a following, or were in a position to attract one. Rajagopalachari did not, as I expected him to do, ask for an interview with Gandhi and the other leaders now in detention. He said he thought there would be no point in approaching them until there was some definite proposal to make. He admitted that what I said about the state of feeling in the country was correct, but pointed out that sooner or later a settlement of some kind would have to be made. I doubt if he was much attracted by my idea of an Executive Council composed of eminent individuals, but we parted on good terms, he asked if he could come and see me again in Delhi, and he has not so far disclosed any part of our discussion to the Press. I told him clearly that what I said was off the record.

After Rajagopalachari, I saw Subbarayan, a very much smaller man who has been in Liberal and Congress politics for many years. He agreed with me that the present régime could carry on quite comfortably till the end of the war if we chose to do so without any trouble unless we get into serious difficulties over food, which His Majesty's Government seems to be trying to arrange;

and said that it was this knowledge and the fear that we should do so which was making the intellectuals so bitter. (Don't tell Winston this, or he will never sanction any step forward if one becomes possible.)

On my return from Madura on 23rd February, I had a long talk with Aney, who came over from Ceylon specially to see me. He told me that the Ceylon Government have submitted proposals for a new constitution to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and that if these proposals (of which the details are not known to him) are sanctioned, India will probably be in a worse position than at present to bargain about the rights of Indians in Ceylon. He asked me to call upon you for help with the Secretary of State for the Colonies. He thought that a settlement of the various disputes between Ceylon and India might be made a condition to the inauguration of a new constitution. I am having this matter examined and may write or telegraph to you about it later. A second and less important point was the treatment by the Ceylon Government of Indian merchants. According to Aney the Ceylon Government requisition almost all goods imported into the island and sell them through co-operative or Government stores. This has hit Indian merchants very hard; the Ceylon Government allege that they are profiteers, but they say that the Ceylon Government's real intention is to put them out of business. I am examining this matter with the Commerce Department here; I refused to see a deputation from an Indian Chamber of Commerce which wished to put the same point to me.

Having dealt with Ceylon problems Aney talked to me about the political situation in India. He is honest and sincere and is genuinely anxious for a settlement, but he had no concrete suggestions to make. If I ever want a go-between with Congress I would as soon use Aney as anyone.

10. I enclose a copy of a letter, dated 17th February[11] from Gandhi and a copy of my reply.[12] I had not intended to write to him about Mrs. Gandhi's death—I have never met him, and he might have found formal condolence annoying—but I thought that in replying to his letter I could hardly avoid saying something. Your telegram No. 203[13] arrived after my letter was in draft. I decided to make no addition; I do not think Gandhi will expect a special message from the Secretary of State, and I would not have written specially myself.

11. There is little new to report about Bengal. Of the 40 civil officers I set out to find 39 have now been found. The Sind officer is the only one missing. Hutchings saw me on his return from Bengal on 17th February. He was rather more hopeful than he had been. In his view, the immediate problem is to move

[11] No. 387. [12] No. 400.

[13] Of 24 February, suggesting that he should be associated with any personal message from Lord Wavell to Mr Gandhi on the death of his wife. L/PO/10/18: f 26.

stocks into danger spots such as Dacca and Chittagong. At Dacca in particular supplies suddenly dried up two or three weeks ago, procurement in the surplus district of Bakarganj, which was to have fed Dacca, having failed. The only remedy for this state of affairs is to show that Government can and will feed Dacca city. Hutchings believes that the Bengal Government, in spite of the slowness of procurement, are now in a position to provide the stocks. The difficulty is transport, and if this difficulty can be overcome an improvement in conditions may be expected. If stocks are not in position before about 15th May difficulties will increase, as the flood water in the rivers will from about that date onwards interfere with road transport. On the whole Hutchings seems to think that the Bengal Government have a sporting chance, but confidence is still lacking and the next few weeks will be critical. Prices are still much too high.

[Para. 12, on the appointment of an Adviser to the Secretary of State and an offer of the Indian High Commissionership in Australia to Sir B. P. Singh Roy, omitted.]

13. We are now at Nagpur, where we stay until the morning of Monday 28th. We then go to a shooting camp for a couple of days, returning to New Delhi on the 2nd March.

402

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NAGPUR, *26 February 1944, 1.35 pm*

SECRET

No. 49–S.C. Your telegram No. 4545[1] of 23rd February. Food Imports. Will discuss situation with Auchinleck and Mountbatten on my return from tour on March 2nd, and will telegraph regarding paragraph 5 of your cable.

2. I shall of course do my best to hold food situation but cannot disguise from His Majesty's Government my very serious apprehension of results to India of their policy. His Majesty's Government had clearest possible warning many months ago of necessity for large imports of grain to insure against repetition of famine disaster in India and has chosen deliberately to disregard advice given by those responsible in India. Result may in the long run have far more adverse effect on the war than if Indian food situation had been taken into account in operational and shipping plans.

3. I confess I am unable to understand why U.S.A. cannot be approached in the matter of food until there is "demonstrable shortage", which must mean in effect when people are dying of starvation. I imagine it is not practice of

American military authorities to deny ammunition to firing line of troops in action until there is demonstrable shortage.

4. Recent abnormal weather conditions in India, belated thunder storms and in some parts even hail, have made crop prospects worse than anticipated. Absence of expected imports has been noted and is making procurement difficult in some districts. Will endeavour by propaganda to make most of small dole you promise but it will be very (group omitted ? hard) going to hold Indian food situation on hand to mouth policy with nothing in hand.

[1] No. 397.

403

Mr Gandhi to the Secretary, Government of India, Home Department[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 161

DETENTION CAMP, *26 February 1944*

Sir,

I have read the speech[2] of the Honourable the Home Member in the Assembly on the debate arising out of the ban on Shrimati Sarojini Devi. The speech has reference among other things to the correspondence between Shrimati Mirabai and myself, and the Government refusal to publish that correspondence. The following is the relevant portion of the speech:—

"She (Shrimati Sarojini Devi) refers, and the point has been raised in this debate, to a letter said to have been written by Miss Slade to Mr Gandhi[3] and Mr Gandhi's reply[4] and I have been asked why no publicity was given to that letter. That letter was written and answered long before the Congress leaders were placed in detention. If Mr Gandhi had wished to give publicity to that letter he was perfectly free to do it himself. But it was a confidential communication addressed to him and I do not see any reason why Government should disclose a communication of that nature. I might say that it would not help the Congress case if it were disclosed.

"Then it has been said that Mrs Naidu wished to defend the Congress from the implication of being pro-Japanese. Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese. Well, the allusion to that in the booklet called "Congress Responsibility" refers to a statement quoted from Pandit Nehru himself.[5] I have not the time to

[1] This letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), pp. 116–17.

[2] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. I, 1944, 7 February 1944, pp. 64–7.

[3] Vol. III, No. 296, Enclosure 1. [4] Vol. III, No. 296, Enclosure 2.

[5] Cmd. 6430, Chapter I, p. 5 quotes Mr Nehru's remark at the Allahabad meeting of the Congress Working Committee (April–May 1942) that 'the whole thought and background' of Mr Gandhi's

quote it at length but if Honourable Members will refer to the quotation given in the "Congress Responsibility" pamphlet they will easily find the passage in question."

Assuming that the report is correct, it makes strange reading.

Firstly, as to the non-publication by me of this correspondence between Shrimati Mirabai and myself, surely the publication was unnecessary until the charge of my being pro-Japanese was spread abroad.

Secondly, why do the Government feel squeamish about publishing "Confidential" correspondence, when both the correspondents have specially invited publication?

Thirdly, I do not understand the reluctance of the Government to publish the correspondence when, according to the Honourable the Home Member, the correspondence will not serve the Congress case.

Fourthly, the Government seem intentionally or unintentionally to have suppressed the very relevant fact that Shrimati Mirabai wrote to Lord Linlithgow drawing attention to the libellous propaganda in the London Press at that time containing allegations that I was pro-Japanese, which allegations she invited him to repudiate. Her letter to Lord Linlithgow enclosed copies of the correspondence referred to, and asked for its publication. It was written on December 24th 1942[6] long before the Government publication entitled "Congress Responsibility" which bears the date February 13th 1943 appeared.

Fifthly, as to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's alleged statement before the Working Committee, I have already made it clear in my reply[7] to the Government Pamphlet that it was wholly wrong on their part to make use of the unauthorised notes of the discussions at the Allahabad meeting of the Working Committee, after Pandit Nehru's emphatic repudiation published in the daily press.

It is difficult for me to understand the Honourable the Home Member's speech and the Government persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people whom they have put in custody and thus effectively prevented from answering those charges. I hope, therefore, that the Government will at the very least see their way to publish the correspondence referred to, namely, Shrimati Mirabai's letter to Lord Linlithgow of the 24th December 1942, together with the enclosures.

I am etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

draft resolution (Vol. II, Enclosure to No. 43, draft No. 1) was 'one of favouring Japan' (see Vol. II, Enclosure to No. 113). Chapter I concludes: 'a draft, to repeat, of which the whole thought and background is one of favouring Japan, a resolution which amounts to running into the arms of Japan.'

6 Vol. III, No. 296.

7 In para. 18 of his letter of 15 July 1943 to the Govt. of India, Home Dept. (see No. 51, note 1), which takes exception to the second passage quoted in note 5 above.

404

Note by the Intelligence Bureau, Government of India, Home Department (Extract)[1]

L/P&J/8/618: ff 5–6, 12v–14

STRICTLY SECRET *28 February 1944*

CONGRESS AND "BIG BUSINESS"

Introductory.

From time to time, during the course of the 1942–43 Congress disturbances and the underground movement which followed, the suggestion has been made that behind the Congress organisation Indian "Big Business" has been influencing Congress policy and affording powerful support to those who sought to put this policy into effect. Typical of the information which has given rise to this suggestion was an early report that Vallabhbhai Patel had been promised ten lakhs of rupees in support of the movement by the Ahmedabad millowners. The reports and opinions quoted below illustrate how widespread is this conviction of powerful assistance to Congress by important financial and commercial interests.

Opinions on extent of Big Business support for Congress.

2. In October, 1942, the Commissioner of Police, Bangalore, reported that it was believed that "Big Business" was financing the movement. In November, 1942, the C.I.O., Lucknow, reported that informed opinion in the United Provinces was that Congress had "no difficulty in obtaining funds from wealthy *banias*, shopkeepers etc." and the Deputy Director of Intelligence, Peshawar, reported that whatever help Congress was receiving in the N.-W.F.P. was chiefly from the Hindu mercantile community of Peshawar. In the same month the C.I.O., Bombay, discussed the subject with the Bombay S.B. and reported: "They are very sure that every Gujerati or Marwari member of the mercantile community, whether Congressman or not, contributed to the funds that were collected by Vallabhbhai Patel before the movement started. There is no trace of these transactions, as our merchants are adepts at writing off big amounts, which they do not want to show in their books". At the end of 1942, the Delhi C.I.D. observed: "There is little doubt that considerable financial support has been given and is being given to the Congress by the Hindu section of the Indian mercantile community."

[1] Enclosed in letter D.O. No. F. 125(64)–GG/42 of 3 April 1944 from Mr Crosthwait to Mr Turnbull. For previous discussion of the connection between Congress and Big Business see Vol. III, Nos. 132 and 595.

Of the Punjab it was reported that it had been largely immune from the Congress movement, although like Delhi it was the Hindu mercantile urban community that had been assisting. In February, 1943, the C.I.O., Lahore, reported that the industrial and commercial interests represented by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry were behind the move for the adjustment of war expenditure and disposal of sterling balances in England and that Indian capitalists were anxious to secure their interests by making conditions which would bring Congress into power. Later in the month, after Gandhi had started his fast, the C.I.O., Calcutta, observed: "In the event of Gandhi's death a revival and strengthening of the Congress outbreak might be expected. These businessmen consider it probable that in that event the Indian business magnates would contribute by obstructing the war effort through closing down all the factories but it was recognised that the Essential Services Ordinance[2] made things somewhat difficult for them." In March, 1943, an Indian journalist writing to the Governor of the United Provinces remarked: "It is a very queer phase of Gandhi's leadership that he has allowed vested interests to exploit him and the Congress. These financial interests are amazingly wily as they exploit both Gandhi and the Government and it is bewildering to know how prominent financial magnates with Congress affiliations have secured war contracts from the Supply Department of Delhi." In May, 1943, a Calcutta businessman, writing to Sir Drummond Shiels of the Empire Parliamentary Association in London said: "Furious over the failure to rush H.M.G. in the beginning of 1942, over the failure of the outbreaks of last August and September and over the calling of Mr Gandhi's bluff last February, the Moderates and the Congress industrialists are bending all their energies to create financial difficulties for the Government. Their plan appears to be to upset if they can the economic stability of the country by economic sabotage on the grand scale." Five months later he wrote: "Congress as an all-India party may for a moment be under a cloud but the Congress and Moderate financial elements—the real core of the whole anti-British movement —are as confident as ever." Later in the letter he described this "core" as consisting of "those whose aim is the destruction of the policy underlying the Cripps proposals, the economic subjugation of the masses—Hindu and Muslim —and the destruction of the Pakistan idea." In June 1943 the comments of another journalist, this time a United States war correspondent, were reprinted in the Delhi newspaper *Dawn*. The correspondent wrote: "Indeed, one of the things that Americans in India cannot understand is why the backers of the Congress disturbances have not been jailed as well. I mean the financiers. If that were done, I believe there would be no more riots. . . . The riots were used to instigate a systematic breakdown of the commercial holdings of British interests. The small firms were caught in a swirl of panic and Indian cash was on hand to buy them up."

Two kinds of support.

3. This widespread impression of Big Business support to Congress must obviously rest on some basis of fact and investigation during the past few months has disclosed some interesting information, not only of financial backing, but also of active participation in subversive activities. This support to the Congress organisation falls into two categories: (1) small-scale support by a very large number of petty tradesmen, merchants and money-lenders and (2) large-scale support by a comparatively small number of important businessmen representing very large commercial interests. Although it is with the second category that this note is mainly concerned, the first cannot be entirely ignored. Reports disclose that wherever Congress machinery for the collection of funds was set up the local Hindu merchants, shopkeepers and money-lenders at first contributed readily and their contributions, which in the aggregate amounted to comparatively large sums, provided the bulk of the Congress funds raised and expended by local Congress subversive groups in the early stages of the movement. Their willingness to subscribe was in many cases partly due to genuine sympathy with the Congress Party's nationalist aspirations, but a more weighty reason in most cases was a desire to keep on the right side of the party which, they thought, was about to seize political power; to many their contributions were an insurance against possible future harassment or interference in their business affairs. Among Hindu businessmen the practice is common of setting aside one pice in every rupee of their daily transactions for charitable purposes and many had no hesitation in making over to Congress all or a substantial portion of these charitable funds. As the open disturbances were brought under control, however, and the underground movement began to flag under Police pressure, the early willingness to subscribe began to disappear and soon a growing element of coercion came to be introduced into the collections, which defeated its own object by alienating the sympathy of more and more subscribers, so that eventually in most places local organisations found themselves unable to raise any funds at all. That there are still some merchants and traders, who are willing to subscribe towards funds intended for the furtherance of Congress subversive activities, is clear, however, from the discovery on October 31st, 1943 at Bhagalpur in Bihar of a list containing the names of nearly 300 subscribers, mostly *banias* and Marwaris, some of whom had contributed as much as Rs. 1000/-. The information relating to large scale support by a comparatively few important industrialists discloses that these consist of several individuals or concerns of Provincial importance and a small

[2] Ordinance XI of 1941 with amendments. This Ordinance gave the Central and Provincial Governments wide powers for the direction of labour and provided penalties of imprisonment and fines against directors and other officers of companies guilty of discontinuing the employment of persons falling within the scope of the Ordinance or of closing their establishments. *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 20 December 1941.

group of all-India importance. The information relating to persons and undertakings of Provincial importance is summarised in paragraphs 4 to 11 below.

* * *

Conclusions (i)-Congress Attitude towards Big Business.

19. Such is the information at present available and it leaves no room for doubt that the Congress movement, both overt and underground, has received substantial support from Indian "Big Business". Furthermore, it may be inferred from what has recently been uncovered at the Calcutta end that there is probably still much to be learnt about the full extent of "Big Business" participation in the underground side of the movement at the Bombay end. Questions which naturally arise from this are what motive has inspired this Big Business support and what the nature is of the relationship between Congress and "Big Business". Ram Swarup Sharma, already twice mentioned in this note,[3] has made some interesting observations in this connection. In his statement to the Police after his arrest, he said:—

> "The predominant element of the present day Indian Big Business is in fact the offspring of the Indian national movements, particularly the Congress. The Bengal Chemical Works, the Indian Insurance Companies including the Hindusthan Co-operative and Lakshmi Insurance Companies were the outcome of the Bengal Partition agitation of 1907. The Swadeshi Textile Mills, the Indian Sugar Mills, the Scindia Steam Navigation Company, the All-India Spinners Association, the Cement, Leather and Paper manufacturing industries came into existence in the wake of the Congress movement. Now this relationship between Congress and Big Business is very much pronounced and has been cemented all the more by their mutual and reciprocal 'give and take' interests. Big Business is anxious to Indianise industries in India and looks to the Congress to achieve National Government, under which alone it will be possible for Big Business to achieve its object. Further, Big Business wants to exploit the prestige and credit of the Congress for its own advantage, as the Birlas do by their close association with Gandhi. It is in the interests of the Congress that Big Business should co-operate with the Britishers with a view to exploiting as far as possible the war conditions and finance the Congress with the proceeds thereof. It is in the interests of the Congress that Big Business controls as many life lines and resources of the Allies as are connected with their war effort so that it can paralyse the Government when an opportunity occurs."

The underground Congress leaders have also made some interesting remarks on the subject. Jai Prakash Narain in his "2nd letter to All Fighters of Freedom", secretly published shortly after his arrest, wrote:—

"This is not the occasion nor the time to examine the role that India's wealthy have played in the present revolution. Here it is enough to comment upon the entire absence of perspective or vision in them. If they could see but a little way ahead they should easily realise that if the national movement were crushed, British capitalism, harassed as it would be by the problems of the post-war world, would give them no quarter whatever. Sheer self-interest, therefore, dictated that they should invest wholeheartedly in the National Revolution. But they have proved to be not only extremely selfish but also exceedingly small men."

Again, in the course of statements made to the Police after his arrest, Jai Prakash Narain declared:—

"I have never stayed with Birlas and in fact I hate their dual policy. On one side they claim to be nationalists while on the other they have all the military contracts. Birlas now claim to be watched by the Police, which might as well be a stunt."

and later said:—

"M. Gandhi is not an imperialist, but people like Vallabhbhai Patel are in favour of capitalism. The Congress Ministries showed capitalist tendencies during their regime and if the Congress continued to be dominated by the capitalists, we, Congress socialists, and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru shall not be able to implement our plans. We shall have to fight against capitalist elements but the latter will try hard to maintain power. The main trouble is that India is populated by rural people, who while being anti-zamindars have no tendency against capitalism. The 'crooked' Congress leaders will end the zamindari system but they know that nationalisation of mines cannot be understood by the kisans. They know that labour's voice is weak, the political leaders will be those who have the kisans of India with them. If we come in majority in the Congress we will end capitalism. If in minority, we can still voice our view point. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is out and out anti-capitalist, but M. Gandhi's 'non-violence' etc. lean him towards capitalism. Sardar Patel has a very strong voice in the Congress. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has none. He is, however, loved by the masses but power is in Sardar Patel's hands. Now, as all the leaders are at Ahmednagar, it is possible that Acharya Narendra Deo and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru might be able to devise something new on socialist lines and overcome Sardar Patel's pro-capitalist policy."

In the issue dated 24.11.43 of *Ninth August*, the underground fortnightly magazine edited by Achyut Patwardhan, the following significant passage occurs:—

"We are not now concerned with the profitmakers, nor with those who feel that they have to hold on to their Government jobs at all costs. Our

[3] i.e. in the portion here omitted.

revolt for National Independence is founded on a broader base, on much more stable foundations than a handful of graduates from foreign Universities and a bunch of business incompetents who would have their financial skins flayed off their backs in a week or two of open competition with the real money-tigers in London or New York. Our Revolution can afford to ignore the latter species of offal in particular, for we depend on the bulk of our forty-crores population which labours for its bread."

Finally, in "An Outline Plan for 1943–44", issued by the "Central Directorate, Indian National Congress," in October 1943, it is stated:—

"As we enter the second year of the struggle we have to take stock and formulate a plan of action. In the stock taking we have items both on the debit and credit sides but the balance of national strength that we carry forward is decidedly in our favour, and of a considerable magnitude.

On the debit side are the depleted resources of men and money—of men due to large-scale arrests of Congressmen and of money because those who lent their niggardly support when the movement was at its height consider it bad investment to apply funds to an enterprise that does not appear to them to be profitable any more. The loss in men is however made up to an extent by the release of Congressmen and by new recruits. But the monetary debit is not so easy to make up. The rich of the land, even most of these [? those] acclaimed to be nationalists are showing a singular lack of understanding and foresight. They do not realise that if nationalist India is suppressed British capitalism will come down with a heavy hand upon them and drive them utterly to the wall. The economic position of Britain after the war will be desperate and the desire of narrow British capitalism will be naturally to rehabilitate itself at the cost of Indian business. At that moment no other force but that of Indian nationalism will be able to save India's industry and trade. To-day a procession of handful of Satyagrahis on Hornby Road or Clive Street may appear to be insignificant to our businessmen, but the ultimate issue between India and Britain will depend upon the maintenance of this spirit of defiance rather than on Leaders' Conferences and such like which make much noise but possess no sanctions and mean no business.

Be that as it may, the financial position, unless by a miracle our business community were to arrive at a true appreciation of the social forces in the country, will continue to be a debit on our backs."

From all this it is evident that the underground leaders are by no means satisfied with the part played by "Big Business" and are far from being a subservient instrument of the big industrialists. Since most of the important leaders of the overt Congress movement are under detention, they have had no opportunity of airing their views on the subject; but an indication of the attitude of the right-wing Congressmen can be obtained from the remarks made by an

ex-member of the Congress Working Committee, C. Rajagopalachariar, in his recently published pamphlet *The Way Out*:—[4]

> "Indian industrialists, while shedding copious tears for nationalism, are making their pile by quiet and uninterrupted services at the call of a bureaucratic Government."

Conclusions (ii)—Big Business Motives.

20. Very little has been disclosed by "Big Business" itself of the motives inspiring it to support the Congress movement. In November 1942, two Gujerati merchants told a secret agent that the motives which led the mill-owners of Ahmedabad to close their mills were more economic than political, as the Congress leaders, particularly Vallabhbhai Patel, had impressed upon them that a Japanese invasion was a certainty and that in that event their accumulated profits in the shape of money would have no value; the mill-owners calculated that the losses incurred by closing their mills would be made up by the rise in prices, which would follow the decrease in production. In February 1943, G. D. Birla told Herbert Matthews, correspondent of the *New York Times*, that reports of Indian industrialists' help to Congress had been "grossly exaggerated" and pointed out that Congress Ministries had taken many measures, designed to secure better wages and working conditions, which had harmed businessmen and involved them in the payment of higher taxes. Birla went on to say "The industrialists did not like it but they took it because they wanted to see India free and wanted the Congress to make a good show". In March 1943, Herbert Matthews visited Ahmedabad and reported that the local millionaires deplored what had been happening in the country and pointed out that their object in life being to make money, like most Indian businessmen, they were keeping one foot in the Congress camp, which they expected to see running the country, and another in the British camp, which "is running it now and gives them fat orders." Probably the best indication, however, of the underlying motives of "Big Business" is to be found in the "master plan"[5] for post-war reconstruction recently published by a group of Bombay businessmen, of whom no fewer than five—J. R. D. Tata, Sir Ardeshir Dalal, Kasturbhai Lalbhai, Sir Shri Ram and G. D. Birla—have been mentioned in this note. This plan discloses an ambitious scheme of benevolent capitalism working through a "National Government with full freedom in economic matters", under which it is proposed to expand industry, agriculture and services enormously, to the moderate benefit of India's millions and to the immense profit of Indian "Big Business". There seems little doubt that "Big Business" has been supporting the Congress movement for much the same reasons that the host of petty Hindu tradesmen, merchants and money-lenders have supported it, i.e. reasons of strong self-interest coloured by a

[4] See No. 334, note 11. [5] See No. 344, note 4.

touch of nationalist sympathy. As to the relationship between "Big Business" and Congress, the available evidence does not appear to justify any assumption that "Big Business" has secretly been using Congress as an unsuspecting instrument towards the achievement of its own ends, or vice versa, but rather that the two have been working together in a partnership of convenience with no illusions on either side. The support given by "Big Business" to the movement, although substantial, has obviously not drawn upon more than a fraction of the total "Big Business" resources and of this the detained Congress Working Committee members, no less than the underground Congress leaders, must be well aware. If at some future date a Congress-dominated government comes into power in this country, it is unlikely that this will be forgotten. The support given by Indian "Big Business" to the Congress movement may be compared with that given by Russian "Big Business" to the Mensheviks before the Russian revolution and that given by German "Big Business" to the Nazis. In both these instances, "Big Business" failed conspicuously in the end to dominate the government which it helped to create and there is no reason to suppose that Indian "Big Business" will prove any more successful in realizing any ambitions that it may have in this direction. In India, as in some other countries, money and politics have been combining for mutual advantage: on the part of politics a necessary expedient to provide the sinews of war; on the part of "Big Business" a grand-scale speculation with fabulous profits to follow the attainment of power by Congress.

405

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *1 March 1944, 6.20 pm*
CONFIDENTIAL *Received: 1 March, 2.30 pm*

No. 444–P. Text of telegram, dated February 21st, 1944, from Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes about attachment scheme has been telegraphed to you in my telegram No. 384–S,[1] dated February 22nd. I propose to send reasoned reply, but as short as possible, explaining that, while I have forwarded text of message to you, I am not recommending that legislation be delayed, that implementation of second stage[2] cannot be reconsidered, and that in view of long history of the case nothing is to be gained by further discussion, I think it would be wise also to counter Chancellor's argument about Parliament legislating for territories and subjects of Indian States by including following sentence in my reply:—

Begins. The powers of the Crown Representative have never been derived from statute law and occasion to legislate has arisen merely because the Judicial Commissioner's Court has held in effect that certain statutory provisions[3] have been so drawn as to impose certain limitations on those powers. *End*s.

Please telegraph whether you agree.[4]

His Excellency the Crown Representative has seen.

[1] No. 395.

[2] The second stage of the attachment scheme involved the extension of the process of attachment to 18 small States with revenues of over Rs. 1 lakh but with less than full judicial powers.

[3] Govt. of India Act 1935, proviso to sec. 2(1) and Crown Representative's Letters Patent, para. 4.

[4] In tel. 5307 of 2 March 1944 to Lord Wavell, Mr Amery concurred in the proposed reply to the Jam Saheb but suggested the quoted sentence should be amplified by the substitution between 'statute law' and 'merely because' of the following: 'and present Bill does not purport to legislate for territories and subjects of Indian States the occasion to legislate having in fact arisen'. L/P&S/13/974: f 172, which gives the tel. no. as 135.

406

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to the Nawab of Bhopal

L/P&S/13/974: f 93

D.O. No. F. 88/5/GG/38 *2–3 March 1944*

My dear Nawab Sahib,

I am grateful to Your Highness for your telegram of 23rd February.[1] The matters which you raise in it were already under my consideration as the result of a telegram[2] on the same subject, and containing somewhat similar suggestions, received by my Political Adviser from His Highness the Chancellor, a few days earlier, and I do not think that I can do better than to send to Your Highness a copy of the reply[3] given to the Chancellor by my Political Adviser under my instructions. Your Highness will see from this the reasons why, to my regret, I feel unable to agree to the suggestions put forward. I am sorry that owing to my absence on tour in Madras and the Central Provinces my reply to Your Highness has been delayed by a few days.[4]

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] No. 398. [2] See No. 395. [3] No. 407.

[4] In his telegram 455–P of 3 March Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery that as he was to see the Nawab of Bhopal on that day and as it was desirable that the Nawab should have his reply before their meeting, this letter and No. 407 were issuing without waiting for a reply to No. 405. L/PO/10/25.

407

Sir F. Wylie to the Maharaja Jam Saheb of Nawanagar

L/P&S/13/974: f 92

CONFIDENTIAL POLITICAL DEPARTMENT, NEW DELHI, *3 March 1944*
D.O. No. D. 1054–P/44
My dear Maharaja Saheb,
I must apologise to Your Highness for not having been able to reply sooner to your telegrams of 21st[1] and 22nd February.[2] But His Excellency the Crown Representative was absent from Delhi in the south of India and there has thus inevitably been delay in laying Your Highness's message before him and obtaining his instructions.

2. His Excellency has now desired me to inform Your Highness that, after full consideration of the points raised in your telegram, he does not feel that he would be justified in recommending to His Majesty's Government, to whom the views contained in your telegram were at once cabled, that the progress of the India (Attachment of States) Bill should be delayed. As Your Highness is aware, schemes for dealing with the problems created by the existence of these small and scattered units in Kathiawar and Gujarat have been the subject of discussion with the Rulers concerned for a number of years past and it was after exhaustive examination that the Crown Representative came to the conclusion, announced in a detailed communiqué dated 16th April 1943,[3] that the difficulties and deficiencies then existing could only be overcome by this scheme of attachment. His Excellency can see no ground for entertaining the hope that after further discussion at this late stage a new and acceptable solution would emerge, and this being the position no advantage is, in his opinion, to be gained by delaying legislation designed to render possible the full implementation of the scheme as announced in the communiqués dated the 16th April and 29th November 1943[4] by reopening the decision with which the second of these two communiqués is concerned. On the contrary the prolongation of the situation created by the decision of the Judicial Commissioner's Court which would be involved by suspending legislation and entering into discussion, would have the most inconvenient, and possibly even dangerous, repercussions in the attached areas and on the daily life of their inhabitants.

3. The fact that it has been found necessary to legislate for the purpose of remedying the situation does not, in His Excellency's view, afford any ground for reconsidering the principle of the attachment scheme. The powers of the Crown Representative have never derived from statute law and occasion to legislate has arisen merely because the Judicial Commissioner's Court has held

in effect that certain statutory provisions have been so drawn as to impose certain limitations on those powers.

4. While His Excellency much regrets that he cannot agree to act in the sense desired in Your Highness' telegram, he wishes me to make it plain, since your Highness has referred to due account being taken of the interests of those who have stood loyally by the Crown in this war and at all other times, that he firmly believes that the course of action pursued in this case by his predecessor and by himself, acting with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, is the one best calculated both to safeguard the interests of the Princely Order and to promote the welfare of the inhabitants of the States.

Yours sincerely,

F. V. WYLIE

[1] See No. 395. [2] No. 396. [3] L/P&S/13/974: f 265.

[4] The final text of this communiqué was sent to Mr Morley by Sir F. Puckle in tel. 10095 of 20 November 1943. L/P&S/13/973: f 66. It announced the institution of the second stage of the attachment scheme (see No. 405, note 2).

408

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *4 March 1944, 12.45 am*
Received: 3 March, 10.45 pm

No. 459–S. My telegram No. 49–S.C.[1] of 26th February. Have re-examined food position for 1944 with Food Department and discussed situation with Supreme Commander and Commander-in-Chief.

2. Q.M.G.'s demand for next 12 months is in thousand tons wheat 724, rice 250. He states this as irreducible minimum for Army.

3. We should be able to meet military demands for rice and if all goes well in Bengal, where issue is still in balance, rice situation should improve over last year to extent that it may prove unnecessary to supply wheat instead of rice to Bengal, Travancore and Cochin.

4. It is wheat position that causes anxiety for 1944. Preliminary review (all figures in thousands of tons) shows that we have to supply deficit areas (i.e. large towns, essential services, e.g. railways, collieries, etc.) with minimum of 800. This compares with 1,001 allotted under 1943–44 basic plan and is conservative estimate. We have therefore to supply for civil and military, 1,524. Against this we have estimated surpluses of 640 leaving gap of 884.

[1] No. 402.

5. We have considered how to reduce this gap by (*a*) reduction of civil ration, (*b*) substitution of other grains for wheat, (*c*) increased procurements of wheat.

6. Civil ration is already at very low level and utmost reduction is 2 ounces which might give reduction of 100 (see however paragraph 9).

7. By using barley, gram and millet we might reduce demand for wheat by 150 which represents maximum indigenous surplus of these grains. We will also try to increase consumption of ground nuts but this must be supplementary to present meagre rations.

8. Whether we can acquire further surpluses is problematical. Punjab crop will definitely be below normal. On other hand Provinces are conservative in their estimates of surpluses. There is not machinery for intensive requisitioning from large numbers of small holders and maximum improvement we can hope for over declared surpluses is 150.

9. Total result of paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 is that we might reduce gap by 400 leaving still deficit of nearly 500 and allowing nothing for central reserve. I must emphasise once again that the whole question of procurement and prices is one of confidence, and that once seriousness of position and size of gap is disclosed (and I simply cannot guarantee to keep it secret) procurement will be almost impossible and price control impossible. Remedies in 6, 7 and 8 would probably fail and gap would be nearer 1,000 than 500.

10. This would mean that either defence services could not be supplied or essential services would fail (e.g. railways, mines and factories) or there would be widespread famine. I do not think I am exaggerating seriousness of prospect.

11. Mountbatten and Auchinleck are prepared to forgo 10% of military demands in favour of food, which would mean, provided that it was always possible to load this percentage on to ships, 20 per month or 240 in year. In view of their shortage of military requirements their willingness to make this concession is evidence of seriousness with which they view situation.

12. Since this will not in my opinion save situation I propose to ask Supreme Commander to invite Americans to make similar cut in their demands in favour of wheat which might give total of 40 per month and might just possibly save situation. Mountbatten leaves for Assam to see Stilwell early March 5th and I am asking him to place situation before Stilwell and get him to recommend to U.S.A. provision of wheat in amounts at least equal to those offered by Mountbatten and Auchinleck.

13. Understand there is million tons wheat available in Australia and I still think that provision of, say, 10 ships as shuttle service would in long run involve

least danger and dislocation to war effort. I believe if matter were put to Americans they would agree to provide these ships, since their troops and war effort in north-east India and China will be affected.[2]

[2] In tel. 516–S of 10 March Lord Wavell asked Mr Amery to amend the figures 20 and 240 in para. 11 of this tel. and 40 in para. 12 to 10, 120 and 20 respectively. L/PO/10/25.

409

Minutes by Mr Amery and Mr Churchill

L/WS/1/654: f 261

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *4 March 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 6/44

Prime Minister
I have received the attached reply[1] from the Viceroy to the telegram[2] conveying the War Cabinet's decision regarding imports of Foodgrains into India which was sent on the 23rd February. A copy of this is attached for convenience of reference.

2. I have telegraphed to the Viceroy[3] to ask that the proposed consultation between Mountbatten and Stilwell referred to in paragraph 12 should not take place until the War Cabinet have had an opportunity of considering the position further. I understand that relations with Stilwell are strained over other matters and I should judge that he is likely to pass on the request to the Americans in the most unfavourable light and I am sure that it would be better to go to the Americans through some other channel.

3. I think it would probably be best if, before the War Cabinet consider this telegram, it were considered by the Chiefs of Staff, who might be asked to report on the military effects of the diversion of the tonnage to which Auchinleck and Mountbatten are prepared to agree (*vide* paragraph 11) and on the advisability of an approach to the Americans on the lines suggested in paragraph 12, whether through Stilwell, or by some other channel. The matter might also, I think, be considered by the Indian Foodgrains Requirements Committee before it comes up in the Cabinet.

4. Meantime, I am circulating the telegram to the Cabinet for Information.

L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 408. [2] No. 397. [3] 5526 Guard of 4 March. L/E/8/3323: f 331.

R/30/1/4: ff 67–8

5 March 1944

Secretary of State for India
(Secret)
You are quite right about Stilwell. He should not be used for any purpose at the present time.[4]

W. S. C.

Sir Edward Bridges
Secretary of State for India
The new telegram had better be submitted to the Committee which examines such matters for the Cabinet.

W. S. C.

[4] The sense of this minute was telegraphed to Lord Wavell by Mr Amery in 5587 Guard of 5 March. L/E/8/3323: f 330.

410

Mr Amery to Colonel Llewellin

L/E/8/3323: f 342

INDIA OFFICE, *4 March 1944*

My dear Jay,
I understand that when the Viceroy's request for imports of foodgrains to India was discussed in the Cabinet Committee[1] Butler said he was unable to accept Reuter's figure of 28½ million tons which you suggested as an estimate for the rice crop just gathered. He explained at the time that the Government of India considered it too early at that date to give a reliable estimate of out-turn. As the G. of I., with all the facts before them, were not prepared to give a higher estimate than 26 million tons, the India Office naturally did not feel justified in accepting an unofficial estimate which exceeded the G. of I.'s figure.

You will no doubt have seen that the official estimate of out-turn now published is 30·6 million tons. This is better even than the press estimate which you quoted during the Committee's discussions. If the statistical aspect of the Indian food situation had been that by which our decisions were guided I should have felt that a more accurate estimate ought to have been made but the Indian case which Butler supported rests upon the view that crop statistics are not the governing factor. The reason is that the Indian peasant producer, habitually under-nourished, tends when he produces a larger crop, to use the surplus to increase his own consumption rather than to increase his cash income by selling it. Consequently a larger crop does not necessarily mean a larger

marketable surplus or a larger supply for the townsman and the wage-earner who not being producers are the sufferers in the present food difficulties in India.

I think I owe you this explanation since the rice figures have so far exceeded the Government of India's earlier forecast. Since neither the Government of India nor H.M.G. eventually took their stand upon the statistical basis, I do not feel that there has been any material disturbance of the foundation on which the Government of India based their request or of that upon which the Cabinet made their decision. I am circulating today a telegram[2] from the Viceroy emphasising the difficulties expected especially in regard to wheat.

I am sending a copy of this letter to Leathers, Butler & Cherwell.

L. S. A.

[1] See No. 372. [2] No. 408.

411

Note by Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Wavell Papers. Notes of Important Interviews, 1944–7, p 46

INTERVIEW WITH MR G. D. BIRLA ON MONDAY, THE 6TH MARCH, 1944

Quite an interesting general conversation on industrial and agricultural development. He says power is first requirement but that Hydro-electric power was sometimes less suitable and more expensive than coal-generated power. He favoured industrial visit to U.K. and would be prepared to go himself. He recommended appointment of a Member for Reconstruction. He mentioned politics very briefly to say that he believed in co-operation, agreed that political leaders had missed a great opportunity during the war, said that Gandhi's mind worked in an unique way but that I was wrong if I thought that Gandhi ever doubted our ability to win war; that the problem was more a psychological one than anything else and that my predecessor for all his great qualities had lacked the personal touch.

An interesting and intelligent personality . . .[1]

W[AVELL]

[1] Personal comment omitted.

412

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3320: f 226

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *7 March 1944, 11.55 pm*
Received: 8 March, 1.15 am

2596. Your telegram to the Viceroy 3795[1] of February 14th. Famine Enquiry.

2. We would much prefer to avoid two separate enquiries and consider that it is possible to constitute one body which can adequately cover the whole field but with instructions to submit an ad interim report on the practical short term measures to be brought into force in Bengal as soon as possible.

3. We think it best, while indicating the general nature of the enquiry, to leave the terms as wide as possible but to emphasise the time factor in respect of Bengal. We suggest terms of reference should be as in succeeding paragraph.

4. To investigate and report to the Governor-General in Council upon the causes of the food shortage economic distress and disease in India and in particular in Bengal in the year 1943 and to make recommendations regarding the best means of preventing their recurrence.

5. Special reference to (*a*) the possibility of improving the diet of the people and the quality and yield of food crop (*b*) the possibility of increasing the efficiency of the administrative system where it has been found unsatisfactory in respect of the matters under enquiry and (*c*) the need for better provision for medical relief and public health.

The Commission will in the first instance direct its enquiries to the case of Bengal and make at the earliest possible moment and in advance of its final report recommendations as to the steps necessary to prevent a recurrence of distress in that province.

5. (sic). Unless ruled out by the fact of being your Adviser we think Woodhead best choice for Chairman since Hailey is not available. We have considered whether his past connection with Bengal could be sustained as an objection. In our view on the contrary that is an advantage and he would be entirely acceptable to us as we know he is to Bengal.

6. We consider Megaw most suitable as Medical and Public Health expert and would be grateful if you would approach him. We are considering the choice of two prominent Indians for agricultural expert and business man. We think it would be as well to defer the question of Secretary until Chairman has been selected and can be consulted.

7. To avoid giving the opportunity for further contentious debate of the whole food problem we consider commission should be constituted by Ordinance after the close of the present session that is to say (? 5th) April.

8. His Excellency the Viceroy has seen.[2]

[1] No. 377.

[2] After further correspondence the following terms of reference were accepted by the Viceroy's Executive Council and included in the Famine Enquiry Commission Ordinance 1944 (Ordinance XXVIII of 1944, published in the *Gazette of India Extraordinary* on 24 June 1944): 'to investigate and report to the Central Government upon the causes of the food shortage and subsequent epidemics in India, and in particular in Bengal, in the year 1943, and to make recommendations as to the prevention of their recurrence, with special reference to—
(*a*) the possibility of improving the diet of the people and the quality and yield of food crops, and
(*b*) the possibility of improving the system of administration in respect of the supply and distribution of food, the provision of emergent medical relief and the emergent arrangements for the control of epidemics in famine conditions in those areas and in those aspects in which the present system may be found to have been unsatisfactory.' The Commission consisted of the following: Sir John Woodhead (Chairman), Mr S. V Ramamurty I.C.S., Sir Manilal B. Nanavati, Mr M. Afzal Husain, Dr W. R. Aykroyd, Mr R. A. Gopalaswami I.C.S. (Secretary). The Commission met for the first time in New Delhi on 18 July 1944. Its *Report on Bengal* was signed on 10 April 1945 and its *Final Report* (Government Press, Madras, 1945) on 1 August 1945.

413

War Cabinet

Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements. I.F.R. (44) 3rd Meeting

L/E/8/3323: ff 315–19

Those present at this meeting held in the Committee Room, India Office, on 7 March 1944 at 3.45 pm were: Mr Amery (in the Chair), Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Lord Cherwell

Also present were: Colonel Oliver Stanley, The Earl of Munster, Sir D. Monteath, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, Mr G. H. Baxter, Mr A. Dibdin, Major-General G. N. Molesworth, Mr J. B. Williams, Mr T. Wilson, Mr J. E. Wall

THE COMMITTEE had before them the following telegrams:

Telegram 4545[1] of 23rd February from the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy.

Telegram 49–S.C.[2] of 26th February from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India.

Telegram 459–S[3] of 3rd March from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India.

[1] No. 397. [2] No. 402. [3] No. 408; the date should be 4 March.

Telegram 5526 GUARD[4] of 4th March from the Secretary of State for India to the Viceroy.

Telegram 478–S GUARD[5] of 6th March from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India.

THE CHAIRMAN outlined the events leading up to this exchange of telegrams and said that the Prime Minister had directed[6] that the Committee should consider the situation and report to the War Cabinet.

After full discussion THE COMMITTEE agreed

(1) that a recommendation should be made to the Prime Minister:
   (a) that he should ask the Chiefs of Staff to consider whether, in the light of the very serious view of the food situation in India taken by the Commander in Chief in India and the Supreme Allied Commander, South East Asia, they could endorse the proposal agreed to by General Auchinleck and Admiral Mountbatten that 10% of their imports of military stores should be cut in favour of imports of food, if the U.S. authorities, who were also concerned, would agree;
   (b) that he should also ask the Chiefs of Staff whether they could endorse the Viceroy's proposal that the U.S. authorities should be invited to make a similar cut of 10% in their military shipments to India;
   (c) that if these proposals could be accepted there would probably be advantage in arrangements being made for the 10% saving to be made available in the form of ships rather than of shipping space.

(2) that a proposal put forward by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Minister of Food, whereby in consideration for the shipment of 25,000 tons a month of rice from India to Ceylon, arrangements would be made for the diversion to India of an equivalent tonnage of wheat and flour otherwise destined for Ceylon, should be recommended to the Viceroy.

THE COMMITTEE were of the opinion that if the Government of India were unable to accept this offer it would greatly weaken the case for the sympathetic treatment of India for which they were appealing.

Copies of the report to the Prime Minister and of the telegram to the Viceroy are annexed hereto.

Annex I to No. 413

REPORT TO THE PRIME MINISTER, DATED 8TH MARCH, 1944

INDIA OFFICE, *8 March, 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 7/44

Prime Minister

As directed in your Minute No. C. 1714 of the 5th March, the Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrains Requirements met yesterday and considered the

attached telegrams from the Viceroy, and in particular his reply, No. 459–S of the 3rd March, sent after consultation with the Commander-in-Chief and Admiral Mountbatten.

2. The Committee felt that they could not make any recommendation to the Cabinet in regard to the proposals in paragraphs 11 and 12 of the Viceroy's telegram 459–S until they had been examined by the Chiefs of Staff and their military implications considered. The two proposals in question are:

(a) The proposal agreed to by General Auchinleck and Admiral Mountbatten to forgo ten per cent. of their demands for military stores, i.e. 240,000 tons of military imports over the next twelve months, in favour of food;
(b) The further proposal of the Viceroy's that the Americans should be asked to make a corresponding total cut in their imported military stores to enable additional wheat to be sent to India.

These two proposals have been put forward by the Viceroy in response to the request in paragraph 5 of the telegram to him No. 4545 of the 23rd February, which had your approval. In this paragraph the Viceroy was asked to confer with Mountbatten and Auchinleck and report what military stores they would be prepared to see removed from their import programme and was told that the Cabinet would be prepared to consider this possibility further in the light of the recommendations they made.

3. If the proposal to divert a proportion of the shipping allocated for importation of military stores into India to the import of food is agreed to in principle, the Committee think that there may be advantage in a different use of it from that proposed by the Viceroy. There are difficulties both in securing bagged wheat and in bringing it to the munition-loading ports on the east coast of America. It would be much more economical of shipping space if it were possible to divert whole ships from the American programme for India to the Australia–India run where they could carry full cargoes of bulk wheat.

4. The Committee also discussed a proposition made by the Minister of Food and the Colonial Secretary for the exchange of wheat and flour now being imported into Ceylon for rice. The Indian rice crop is now estimated to produce 30·6 million tons as against 26 million tons originally estimated. Though estimated production is a very different thing from supplies at the disposal of the Government of India for deficit areas and for export, the rice position in India is bound to be easier this year than last, and it may be that some arrangement of this sort will be feasible. I am telegraphing at once to the Viceroy about this and it cannot be considered further until we have his views.

4 See No. 409, note 3.
5 Acknowledging tels. referred to in notes 3 and 4 of No. 409 and urging immediate decision on imports. L/PO/10/25.
6 See No. 409.

5. The Committee thought it would be desirable that the Viceroy's proposals should be considered by the Chiefs of Staff forthwith, so that their recommendations could be considered by the War Cabinet, together with the Viceroy's reply as regards an exchange with Ceylon, early next week. I hope, therefore, that you will now refer the matter to the Chiefs of Staff.

(Signed) L. S. AMERY

Annex II to No. 413

COPY OF TELEGRAM NO. 5927 DATED 10TH MARCH, 1944 FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO THE VICEROY

[*See No. 422, note 1.*]

414

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *7 March 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

My last letter to you is dated the 25th February,[1] and I have not written since. On the 28th February we moved from Nagpur to the *sal* forests of the Mandla District where we spent 2½ very pleasant days shooting. The party's bag included six tiger, nine deer and some peafowl. Even in a remote jungle one is pursued by work, but the short change was very welcome.

2. I was pleased with what I saw of the Central Provinces. While I was at Nagpur I visited a village, a rural tahsil office, and a small irrigation work. I also saw the new technological institute, the agricultural farm and college, and the civil engineering school. Twynam is energetic and competent, and his Advisers, Burton, Greenfield and Binney, seemed to me less official in outlook than most of the Advisers I have met elsewhere. There is obviously a strong provincial tradition, and administrative standards are probably as good as those in the bigger provinces. Twynam has been thinking a good deal about the political situation and let me have an appreciation which he has just written. I am thinking of writing an appreciation myself, and, if I do, will send you a copy of it and of Twynam's. Like most studies of Indian politics, Twynam's paper is stronger on the analysis than on the solution.

3. We returned to New Delhi on the afternoon of 2nd March. I at once took up with Auchinleck and Mountbatten the question of food imports, about which we have since exchanged fresh telegrams.[2] My persistence must be a great nuisance to you, but I am so certain that imports are vital to India that I am determined not to accept a refusal. The P.M. is probably most annoyed,

but that cannot be helped. He will have less trouble in the end if he gives me imports now to prevent a famine.

My intervention[3] about groundnuts must also have caused some inconvenience. The telegram[4] agreeing to an immediate export of 325,000 tons, and to further probable exports making up a grand total of 440,000 tons, was despatched after a discussion in the War Resources Committee of Council without my personal approval. It seemed to me that His Majesty's Government were taking far too much for granted, and that the Food Department had not considered in sufficient detail the possibility of using groundnut flour as an effective supplement to wheat. I have since withdrawn my embargo, as I am satisfied that movement can safely be allowed to continue; but our long-term policy needs further examination which is now being undertaken.

4. The various Council appointments which we have been discussing for some weeks have now all been settled. Raisman is not, I think, very pleased about his extension, but he has accepted it with a fairly good grace. There will doubtless be public protests against it, and also against the selection of Mudie as Home Member and of Thorne to act for him until he is available. But as regards Raisman at least, a good many people will undoubtedly take the view that it was best to extend him. The Finance Membership in war time is no bed of roses, and 1944–45 will be a critical year. A new man, however able, would have taken several months to find his feet.

5. Raisman's budget has met with a mixed, and on the whole a bad, reception in the Legislature. Benthall had a bad time too with the proposal to increase railway fares by 25 per cent.—I knew that this proposal would be unpopular, and thought it might act as a lightning conductor for the budget proper. I doubt if we can afford to give way on railway fares—Raisman assumed that the increase would be made, and the yield should be about Rs. 12 crores, which is a fairly considerable sum. But a discussion in Council today (March 8th) has shown that a majority of Council are definitely in favour of dropping the increase.

6. I am very glad that His Highness of Kashmir has accepted the invitation to go to London as one of our representatives at the War Cabinet. His letter of acceptance showed that he was genuinely pleased at being invited, and I hope he will be a success. The details are now being settled, and he may come and stay here for a day or two before he leaves.

Azizul Haque has just informed me that B. P. Singh Roy has provisionally accepted the Australian High Commissionership. Confirmation is expected within a few days. He has since told me that Roy will probably refuse in the

[1] No. 401. [2] See Nos. 408 and 409, notes 3 and 4.
[3] Tel. 440–S of 29 February which asked for tel. 428–S to be cancelled. L/E/8/2037.
[4] 428–S of 27 February. *Ibid.*

end. I am still in some difficulty about the departmental responsibility for this appointment, and for relations with the Australian High Commissioner here. As you have pointed out in a telegram[5] to which I still have to reply, the External Affairs Department should logically be in charge. The trouble is that for various good reasons the High Commissioner in London is under the Commerce Department, and the High Commissioner in South Africa is under the Department of Indians Overseas, and that a decision to bring new High Commissioners under the External Affairs Department might be regarded as diminishing the authority of Indian Members of Council. Ultimately, I have no doubt, there will be an Indian Member in charge of External Affairs controlling a Department with a Foreign Section corresponding to the present External Affairs Department, and an Empire or Commonwealth Section corresponding roughly to the present Department of Indians Overseas. If feeling against new Indian High Commissioners and relations with Dominions High Commissioners here being placed in my own portfolio seems strong, there is a good deal to be said for placing the responsibility with the Department of Indians Overseas; but here again the Commerce [Department] can argue that, except in South Africa, the number of Indians resident in the Dominions is comparatively small, and that such work as an Indian High Commissioner has to do will be mainly concerned with commercial matters. I am going into the whole problem again with Azizul Haque, Khare, Mudaliar and Sultan Ahmed, and will let you know as soon as I can what the best arrangement will be.

7. Apart from the problem of foodgrains imports to which I have referred above, I have little to report about the food situation. Casey is still feeling his way; in a recent private letter to you[6] of which he sent me a copy, he said that his main difficulties were administrative, and that the form of Government—Ministerial or Section 93—was at the moment of little practical importance. He has asked me to find him 180 odd officers—including the 50 odd originally asked for by Rutherford. I have found him 55 (16 soldiers, and 39 civilians extracted with great difficulty from the Provinces), and hope to find him over 100 more from the Army when the results of a call for volunteers for civil employment are known. He has also asked me to help with the return to Bengal of river craft and of officers of the River Steamer Companies now serving with the Army or R.I.N., and I am seeing what can be done about this. In a letter[7] which I have just received he has drawn attention to the importance of an adequate supply of consumers' goods, and has asked for special help from Hydari's Department. Hutchings has had a copy of [a] paper prepared by him for his Ministers, which shows that he is by no means satisfied with the pace of procurement and the arrangements for distribution, and is contemplating a requisitioning system. He is also reorganising the publicity arrangements. These activities are all to the good, but requisitioning will be a very difficult

business—it requires either a large and energetic administrative staff, which Bengal does not at present possess, or very strong support from public opinion which has so far been entirely absent in Bengal. In Bombay, a voluntary system, under which Government bought a fixed proportion of the crop from the villages, showed signs of breaking down, and Colville, after a great deal of discussion, has had to go over to a system of statutory requisitioning, which even in his well-organised districts will be far from easy. Mudie is not yet out of his troubles in Bihar, but I have had no further detailed report from him. In the Punjab wheat prices have fluctuated sharply but now seem comparatively steady at between Rs. 9 and Rs. 10 per maund. In the United Provinces they have hardened at about Rs. 11. The settlement of prices for *rabi* 1944 begins about 15th March, with a meeting here of the Price Advisory Committee. It is of the greatest importance that we should have definite information about import prospects before serious negotiations begin.

[Para. 8, on the case of an Indian Police officer heavily in debt; and para. 9, on Professor A. V. Hill's appointment as Scientific Adviser to Admiral Mountbatten, omitted.]

10. In paragraph 7 of my letter of 8th January,[8] I mentioned the question of the custody of private correspondence and the practice of Viceroys and Governors removing such correspondence when their term of office ends. There is no particular hurry about this matter, but I shall be grateful some time for your views on it.

11. I was very glad to hear that you were back at work again.

[5] See No. 370, note 20. Lord Wavell replied to this tel. in his 508-S of 9 March. He was definitely of the opinion, after discussion with Sir O. Caroe and informal consultation with some Indian members of Council, 'that it would not be appropriate to place responsibility for Australia High Commissioner on Department of External Affairs which is regarded by Indian opinion as dealing purely with foreign countries.' On the whole, Lord Wavell favoured attaching the officer to the Indians Overseas Department and proposed issuing orders to this effect unless Mr Amery had anything further to urge. L/P&J/8/190.

[6 and 7] Not traced in India Office Records. [8] No. 310.

415

Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/4808: f 84

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *8 March 1944, 7.20 am*
Received: 8 March, 1.45 am

2597. Bengal mortality statistics. Figures of reported deaths from all causes in 1943 for all districts have now been received by Public Health Commissioner from Directorate of Public Health of Bengal.

2. Total reported deaths from all causes 1,873,749 giving excess above average for 5 years 1938 to 1942 of 688,846. Total reported deaths from cholera 214,175 giving excess 160,909. Total reported deaths from malaria 674,330 giving excess 285,792. Total reported deaths from smallpox 22,005 giving excess 14,075.

3. Total of deaths from January to June 1943 was 574,245 compared with average over previous 5 years of 558,890. Excess mortality in first six months was therefore 15,355. Deducting this figure from 688,846 the excess in the second six months when famine conditions arose was 673,491.[1]

4. Number of cholera, malaria and smallpox deaths in second 6 months and excess over average in that period is being ascertained. There may be 10 days delay as Director of Public Health is on tour.[2]

5. Absolute accuracy of vital statistics cannot be expected either as regards numbers or cause of death more especially in villages where reporting agency is uneducated, insufficiently supervised and low paid village chaukidar. In making any statement figures should be referred to as reported (repeat reported) figures.

6. Suggest advisability of avoiding any expression which might be interpreted by ill disposed critics here as attempt to minimise the disaster.

[1] Tel. 2737 of 11 March from the G. of I., Dept. of Education, Health and Lands to the Secretary of State gave an amended version of this para., in which the figure 574,245 was altered to 569,426, the figure 15,355 to 10,536 and the figure 673,491 to 678,310. L/E/8/4808: f 80.

[2] In tel. 3067 of 18 March, the G. of I., Dept. of Education, Health and Lands informed the Secretary of State that mortality figures for cholera, malaria and smallpox for the second half of 1943 were: 'cholera 179,911 (excess over 5 years average 151,577) malaria 479,039 (excess 266,208) smallpox 11,930 (excess 10,630).' L/E/8/4808: f 63.

416

Government of India, Department of Education, Health and Lands to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/4808: f 83

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *8 March 1944, 11.15 pm*
Received: 9 March, 3 am

2642. Bengal mortality statistics. Continuation my telegram No. 2597 dated 8th March.

2. These vital statistics do not of course provide any basis for an estimate of number of deaths from starvation. Deaths from starvation are not separately recorded but are recorded under heading of some concurrent disease e.g. malaria

or pneumonia or under heading "other causes". The excess of 673,491 can only be regarded as a general indication of increase in mortality due (1) to starvation (2) to malnutrition resulting in impairment of powers of resistance to disease of all kinds including epidemic disease and (3) to epidemic disease not associated with starvation or malnutrition. No estimate of extent to which each of these factors contributed to excess of mortality is possible.

3. The spread of cholera was probably favoured by conditions arising out of famine such as migration of population and malnutrition. The cholera mortality reported is third highest recorded in Bengal since 1900 the years of higher mortality being 1900 (345,878) and 1908 (268,968).

4. The malaria epidemic was the most severe which has occurred since that which followed influenza epidemic of 1918–19. Causes of major waves of malaria which affected Bengal from time to time are obscure but prevalence of famine conditions malnutrition the migration of infected destitutes and influx of large numbers of infected persons from Burma are factors which probably contributed to severity of epidemic in 1943.

417

Mr Gandhi to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/623: ff 156–9

DETENTION CAMP, *9 March 1944*

Dear Friend,
I must thank you for your prompt reply[2] to my letter of 17th February.[3] At the outset I send you and Lady Wavell my thanks for your kind condolences on the death of my wife. Though for her sake I have welcomed her death as bringing freedom from living agony, I feel the loss more than I had thought I should. We were a couple outside the ordinary. It was in 1906 that, after mutual consent and after unconscious trials, we definitely adopted self-restraint as a rule of life. To my great joy this knit us together as never before. We ceased to be two different entities. Without my wishing it, she chose to lose herself in me. The result was she became truly my *better* half. She was a woman always of very strong will which, in our early days, I used to mistake for

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 16 March 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State. Mr Gandhi's letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) pp. 119–22 and in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 299–305.

[2] No. 400. [3] No. 387.

obstinacy. But that strong will enabled her to become, quite unwittingly, my teacher in the art and practice of non-violent non-co-operation. The practice began with my own family. When I introduced it in 1906 in the political field it came to be known by the more comprehensive and specially coined name of Satyagraha. When the course of Indian imprisonments commenced in South Africa, Shri. Kasturba was among the civil resisters. She went through greater physical trials than I. Although she had gone through several imprisonments, she did not take kindly to the present incarceration during which all creature comforts were at her disposal. My arrest simultaneously with that of many others, and her own immediately following, gave her a great shock and embittered her. She was wholly unprepared for my arrest. I had assured her that the Government trusted my non-violence, and would not arrest me unless I courted arrest myself. Indeed, the nervous shock was so great that after her arrest she developed violent diarrhoea and, but for the attention that Dr. Sushila Nayar who was arrested at the same time as the deceased was able to give her, she might have died before joining me in this detention camp. My presence soothed her and the diarrhoea stopped without any further medicament. Not so the bitterness. It led to fretfulness ending in painfully slow dissolution of the body.

In the light of the foregoing you will perhaps understand the pain I felt when I read in the papers the statement[4] made on behalf of the Government which I hold was an unfortunate departure from truth regarding her who was precious to me beyond measure. I ask you please to send for and read the complaint[5] in the matter which I have forwarded to the Additional Secretary to the Government of India (Home Department). Truth is said to be the first and the heaviest casualty in war. How I wish in this war it could be otherwise in the case of the Allied Powers!

I now come to your address[6] which you delivered before the Legislature and of which you have kindly sent me a copy. When the newspapers containing the address were received, I was by the bedside of the deceased. Shri. Mirabai read to me the Associated Press report. But my mind was elsewhere. Therefore the receipt of your speech in a handy form was most welcome. I have now read it with all the attention it deserves. Having gone through it, I feel drawn to offer a few remarks, all the more so as you have observed that the views expressed by you "need not be regarded as final". May this letter lead to a reshaping of some of them!

In the middle of page two you speak of the welfare of the "Indian peoples". I have seen in some Viceregal pronouncements the inhabitants of India being referred to as the people of India. Are the two expressions synonymous?

At page thirteen referring to the attainment of self-government by India you say, "I am absolutely convinced not only that the above represents the genuine desire of the British people, but that they wish to see an early realisation

of it. It is qualified only at present by an absolute determination to let nothing stand in the way of the earliest possible defeat of Germany and Japan; and by a resolve to see that in the solution of the constitutional problem full account is taken of the interests of those who have loyally supported us in this war and at all other times—the soldiers who have served the common cause; the people who have worked with us; the Rulers and populations of the States to whom we are pledged; the minorities who have trusted us to see that they get a fair deal . . . . . but until the two main Indian parties at least can come to terms, I do not see any immediate hope of progress." Without reasoning it out, I venture to give my paraphrase of your pronouncement. "We the British shall stand by the Indian soldier whom we have brought into being and trained for consolidating our rule and position in India, and who, by experience, we have found can effectively help us in our wars against other nations. We shall also stand by the Rulers of the Indian States, many of whom are our creation and all of whom owe their present position to us, even when these Rulers curb or actually crush the spirit of the people whom they rule. Similarly shall we stand by the minorities whom too we have encouraged and used against the vast majority when the latter have at all attempted to resist our rule. It makes no difference that they (the majority) seek to replace it by a rule of the will of the people of India taken as a whole. And in no case will we transfer power unless Hindus and Muslims come to us with an agreement among themselves." The position taken up in the paragraph quoted and interpreted by me is no new thing. I regard the situation thus envisaged as hopeless, and I claim in this to represent the thought of the man in the street. Out of the contemplation of this hopelessness was born the anguished cry of 'Quit India'. What I see happening in this country day after day provides a complete vindication of the 'Quit India' formula as defined by me in my considered writings.

I note as I read your speech that you do not regard the sponsors of the formula of 'Quit India' as outcasts to be shunned by society. You believe them to be high-minded persons. Then, treat them as such and trust their interpretation of their own formula and you cannot go wrong.

After developing the Cripps offer you have said at page sixteen in the middle of the paragraph, ". . . . . the demand for release of those leaders who are in detention is an utterly barren one until there is some sign on their part of willingness to co-operate. It needs no consultation with anyone or anything but his own conscience for any one of those under detention to decide whether he will

[4] By Mr Butler. *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 397, 2 March 1944, col. 1554. Mr Butler stated Mrs Gandhi while in detention 'was receiving all possible medical care and attention, not only from her regular attendants but from those desired by her family' and that her funeral rites 'took place, at the request of Mr Gandhi, in the grounds of the Aga Khan's Palace at Poona'.

[5] A copy of this letter of 4 March is on L/P&J/8/622.

[6] See No. 399, note 1.

withdraw from the Quit India resolution and the policy which had such tragic consequences, and will co-operate in the great tasks ahead." Then again, reverting to the same subject you say on pages nineteen and twenty, "There is an important element which stands aloof; I recognise how much ability and high-mindedness it contains; but I deplore its present policy and methods as barren and unpractical. I should like to have the co-operation of this element in solving the present and the future problems of India. If its leaders feel that they cannot consent to take part in the present Government of India, they may still be able to assist in considering future problems. But I see no reason to release those responsible for the declaration of August 8th, 1942, until I am convinced that the policy of non-co-operation and even of obstruction has been withdrawn—not in sack-cloth and ashes, that helps no one—but in the recognition of a mistaken and unprofitable policy."

I am surprised that you, an eminent soldier and man of affairs, should hold such an opinion. How can the withdrawal of a resolution, arrived at jointly by hundreds of men and women after much debating and careful consideration, be a matter of individual conscience? A resolution jointly undertaken can be honourably, conscientiously and properly withdrawn only after joint discussion and deliberation. Individual conscience may come into play after this necessary step, not before. Is a prisoner ever *free* to exercise his conscience? Is it just and proper to expect him to do so?

Again, you recognise "much ability and high-mindedness" in those who represent the Congress organisation and then deplore their present policy and methods as "barren and unpractical". Does not the second statement cancel the first? Able and high-minded men may come to erroneous decisions, but I have not before heard such people's policy and methods being described as "barren and unpractical". Is it not up to you to discuss the *pros* and *cons* of their policy with them before pronouncing judgment, especially when they are also admittedly representatives of millions of their people? Does it become an all-powerful Government to be afraid of the consequences of releasing unarmed men and women with a backing only of men and women equally unarmed and even pledged to non-violence? Moreover, why should you hesitate to put me in touch with the Working Committee members so as to enable me to know their minds and reactions?

Then you have talked of the "tragic consequences" of the 'Quit India' resolution. I have said enough in my reply[7] to the Government pamphlet "Congress Responsibility etc."[8] combating the charge that the Congress was responsible for those consequences. I commend the pamphlet and my reply to your attention, if you have not already seen them. Here I would just like to emphasise what I have already said. Had Government stayed action till they had studied my speeches and those of the members of the Working Committee history would have been written differently.

You have made much of the fact that your Executive Council is predominantly Indian. Surely, their being Indians no more makes them representatives of India than non-Indians. Conversely it is quite conceivable that a non-Indian may be a true representative of India, if he is elected by the vote of the Indian people. It would give no satisfaction even if the head of the Indian Government was a distinguished Indian *not* chosen by the free vote of the people.

Even you, I am sorry, have fallen into the common error of describing the Indian forces as having been recruited by "voluntary enlistment". A person who takes to soldiering as a profession will enlist himself wherever he gets his market wage. Voluntary enlistment has come to bear by association a meaning much higher than that which attaches to an enlistment like that of the Indian soldier. Were those who carried out the orders at the Jallianwalla massacre[9] volunteers? The very Indian soldiers who have been taken out of India and are showing unexampled bravery will be ready to point their rifles unerringly at their own countrymen at the orders of the British Government, their employers. Will they deserve the honourable name of volunteers?

You are flying all over India. You have not hesitated to go among the skeletons of Bengal. May I suggest an interruption in your scheduled flights and a descent upon Ahmednagar and the Aga Khan's Palace in order to probe the hearts of your captives? We are all friends of the British, however much we may criticise the British Government and system in India. If you can but trust, you will find us to be the greatest helpers in the fight against Nazism, Fascism, Japanism and the like.

Now I revert to your letter of the 25th February. Shri. Mirabai and I have received replies to our representations. The remaining inmates have received their notices. The reply[10] received by me I regard as a mockery; the one received by Shri. Mirabai as an insult. According to the report of the Home Member's answer[11] to a question in the Central Assembly, the replies received by us seem to be no replies. He is reported to have said that the stage "for the review of the cases had not yet arrived. Government at present were only receiving representations from prisoners". If the representations in reply to the Government notices are to be considered merely by the executive that imprisoned them without trial, it will amount to a farce and an eye-wash, meant perhaps for foreign consumption, but not as any indication of a desire to do justice. My views are known to the Government. I may be considered an impossible man—though altogether wrongly I would protest. But what about

7 See No. 51, note 1. 8 Cmd. 6430.

9 On 13 April 1919 troops under the command of General Dyer fired on a crowd in a large enclosed space in Amritsar known as Jallianwalla Bagh. Some 379 people were killed and over 1,200 were wounded. A committee of enquiry with Lord Hunter as chairman later produced a report (Cmd. 681) which censured General Dyer.

10 Annex 2 to No. 340.

11 *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. II, 1944, 2 March 1944, p. 768.

Shri. Mirabai? As you know, she is the daughter of an Admiral[12] and former Commander-in-chief of these waters. But she left the life of ease and chose instead to throw in her lot with me. Her parents, recognising her urge to come to me, gave her their full blessings. She spends her time in the service of the masses. She went to Orissa at my request to understand the plight of the people of that benighted land. That Government was hourly expecting Japanese invasion. Papers were to be removed or burnt, and withdrawal of the civil authority from the coast was being contemplated. Shri. Mirabai made Chaudwar (Cuttack) airfield her headquarters, and the local military commander was glad of the help she could give him. Later she went to New Delhi and saw General Sir Allen [Alan] Hartley and General Molesworth, who both appreciated her work and greeted her as one of their own class and caste. It therefore baffles me to understand her incarceration. The only reason for burying her alive, so far as I can see, is that she has committed the crime of associating herself with me. I suggest your immediately releasing her, or your seeing her and then deciding. I may add that she is not yet free from the pain for the alleviation of which the Government sent Capt. Simcox at my request. It would be a tragedy if she became permanently disabled in detention. I have mentioned Shri. Mirabai's case because it is typically unjust.

I apologise to you for a letter which has gone beyond the length I had prescribed for myself. It has also become very personal and very unconventional. That, however, is the way my loyalty to friends works. I have written without reservation. Your letter and your speech have given me the opening. For the sake of India, England and humanity I hope you will treat this as an honest and friendly if candid response to your speech.

Years ago while teaching the boys and girls of Tolstoy Farm in South Africa I happened to read to them Wordsworth's "Character of the Happy Warrior". It recurs to me as I am writing to you. It will delight my heart to realise that warrior in you. There will be little difference between the manners and methods of the Axis Powers and the Allies if the war is to resolve itself into a mere trial of brute strength.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[12] Admiral Sir Edmond Slade, C.-in-C. East Indies, 1909–12.

418

Sir M. Hallett (United Provinces) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/273: ff 160–2

SECRET *9 March 1944*

No. U.P. 220

7. I am not unduly worried by newspaper criticism, but I only feel depressed because of the undue influence which this constant stream of destructive criticism probably has on the intelligentsia, criticism put forward by people from Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru downwards who have done nothing to help in war work and which, though it does not reach or affect the lower classes, does affect that class of person, often of the student type, who will join hands with Congress when the leaders are released. They will stump the country, make vicious speeches against Government and British officers and would have a great influence on any general election. The problem is to create a party which will fight these destructive critics; we have plenty of friends in this country but they are not vocal or organised.

8. There has been recently the attempt of Madan Mohan Malaviya to start an All Parties Conference. I do not know Malaviya well, in fact I think about the only time that I met him was once some years ago when I tried to get him interested in getting hospitals in Allahabad: my attempt was a failure and he did nothing. In fact I always regarded him as having become, like so many Hindus, a religious recluse in his old age; he is certainly not a suitable leader in these days of war. Even Sir Tej Bahadur seems to have thrown cold water on his idea and Congress leaders who are out of jail are not prepared to support him. But my Secretary recently had a talk with his son, Pandit Radha Kant Malaviya, and this is the note that Stephenson records of his interview:—

> "He said that he had been discussing the deadlock with Mr. Sastri, Mr. Jayakar and Sir Radha Krishna. He had been to Delhi and had discussed the matter with Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar, Mr. Khare and certain other members of the Executive Council, who he said agreed with him, and he made a representation to the Viceroy that he and one or more of the other three gentlemen with whom he had discussed the matter, should be permitted to see Mr. Gandhi to persuade him (1) to withdraw the August resolution,[1] which they were convinced was a mistake; (2) if he did not permit the Congress to take office in the province, at least to permit others to do so. Mr. Malaviya said that it was unthinkable that the minority should be permitted to take office, but the non-Congress Hindus, among whom he

[1] Vol. II, No. 470.

included himself as a member of the Congress National party, should be allowed by Mr. Gandhi to take office, and if the Congress themselves did not co-operate, at any rate they should not obstruct. He awaited a reply from the Viceroy, but he wished to inform H.E. of what he had done."

9. I do not know if this representation has come before you. Clearly the request should not be allowed. As you have said, if Gandhi wishes to withdraw the August resolution, he can do so without discussion. Why Gandhi's permission should be needed to allow persons other than Congress to take office is not clear; perhaps he means that Congress should not oppose them. Again, the proposal seems to overlook the Muslims and there can be no Government in this province unless the Muslims come in, to say nothing of the depressed classes, all of whom seem to me to hate the possibility of a Brahmin raj, such as this would be. Any such coalition ministry, unless possibly it was controlled by the Muslims, would slow down the war work of this province to a very dangerous extent. I do not, however, treat these suggestions very seriously; till some attempt has been made in this province to get in the Muslim League, nothing can be done.

10. Some landlord friends of mine are coming to see me shortly to discuss what they should do. The point which I shall rub in is that they must drop what I may call the landlord complex and the claim of special protection for landlords and taluqdars. They should try to start an agriculturist party and act as leaders of the rural population. Of course the difficulty is that the landlords have as a class done little to help their tenants, but in spite of this some have still a good deal of influence. The future Government of this province will have several crores of rupees in the Post-war Reconstruction Fund and hence they could put out an attractive programme of rural development; promises of tube wells or canals might prove attractive to the electorate. I also shall tell them to make use of the Soldiers' Boards so as to get ex-soldiers on their side. I do not suppose my advice will do much good: as Your Excellency saw when you were here, the Taluqdars are rather an effete lot.

11. One more political point. A Muslim friend of mine pressed me to suggest that you should send for and see Jinnah just as you have seen Rajagopalachariar and others. To wait for Jinnah to ask to see you puts him on the same level as Gandhi. I think it might do some good if you could see him; though I admit it will at once give rise to speculation and kite flying.

419

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *9 March 1944*
Received: 17 March

The result of your discussion with Auchinleck and Mountbatten about food imports, together with the further suggestion that the Americans should make a corresponding cut of some 240,000 tons in their imports of war-like stores was remitted by the Prime Minister[1] to the Cabinet Committee which has hitherto been considering the food question. We met yesterday[2] and the Committee decided that the matter ought to go before the Chiefs of Staff to see whether they would be prepared to endorse what Auchinleck and Mountbatten recommend and themselves urge it upon the Americans, as well as make the further recommendation affecting the Americans themselves. The most I could get the Committee to agree to was that the proposal as stated in your telegram[3] should be passed on to the Chiefs of Staff for serious consideration. The general tone of the Committee, I fear, was not very sympathetic, and Leathers in particular is so convinced of the additional demand being made for further military operations that he doubts whether the Chiefs of Staff would be prepared to endorse even Mountbatten and Auchinleck's self-denying proposal. Anyhow, the Committee's recommendation in that respect has gone to the Prime Minister for him to pass on to the Chiefs of Staff.

2. Meanwhile the Minister of Food made an interesting suggestion which I think has much to commend it, namely, that in view of the far larger rice crop now ascertained—though of course not procured—it ought to be possible to put Ceylon back on a rice basis and release an equivalent amount of wheat for India. On a yearly basis the proposal, as eventually modified, amounts to substituting for 180,000 tons of wheat from Australia the same amount to go to India in exchange for Indian rice, while a further 120,000 tons of rice, which Ceylon was to get from Brazil and other sources, is to be supplied by India in return for wheat, which the Ministry of War Transport will arrange to find. In actual discussion, however, the Colonial Secretary was not prepared to commit himself to a complete substitution, lest the arrangement might have to be reversed a little later and Ceylon, after having been with much difficulty taught to accommodate itself to wheat, should once more be put back on to wheat after an interval of rice. Accordingly he is only prepared to do it on the basis, at any rate for the present, of a substitution of half the wheat by rice. This would amount to 300,000 tons (including the 120,000 tons of rice which

[1] See No. 409. [2] On 7 March (No. 413). [3] No. 408.

Ceylon was to have got from other sources). Further he insisted that not only must his rice be absolutely secured before he is prepared to release his wheat, but, as Ceylon is living from hand to mouth, he wants a small initial stockpile of 20,000 or 30,000 tons to bridge over any transition supposing the arrangement broke down. This would of course not be in addition to what India is to supply over the whole period, but the rice sent in subsequent months to be reduced accordingly. Finally, it was generally thought preferable to make the arrangement only for the remaining nine months of the year and reconsider later, rather than commit ourselves for a whole year. In view of the uncertainty whether it will be possible to get any wheat from any other source, I do hope you will have been able to see your way to accept this offer, which should give you 300,000 tons over a full year and possibly more if Stanley's fears about Ceylon having to be put back on wheat again can presently be allayed.

3. I wish I could give you a more hopeful account of the position at this end. But we have got to face the fact that everything is being subordinated just now to the insatiable demands for shipping in connection with the immediately impending operations and the inevitable tendency here is to over-insure on that side, even at the risk of under-insuring on the Indian side. On top of that it also looks as if there was going to be a world-wide food shortage in the near future, so that even if and when shipping becomes available later on it may become quite impossible to secure the wheat to put into the ships.

4. The Kathiawar Attachment Bill went through quite happily so far as the 2nd reading was concerned, while I was still away. The Committee stage comes on next Tuesday and I do not foresee any serious difficulty. All the same I shall be glad, as no doubt you will, once the thing is out of the way.

5. I am very glad that the Departments concerned with Government hospitality here have been forthcoming over the visit of the Indian scientists and I can only hope now that the scientists themselves will seize the opportunity and that their visit here will be really fruitful.

6. I hope the same about the industrialists and as long as the thing is decided now in principle I hope you will not feel that putting off the actual visit for a few months will seriously prejudice the idea. The Departments here are sympathetic, but all feel that the situation will be much more favourable for practical discussion a little bit later.

7. P. J. Griffiths, the Director of the National War Front, has been here for a short visit. He has been very generous in giving his time to speaking to audiences in various parts of the country and I have seen a number of letters which indicate that his speeches were very well received. He spoke both on the current situation in India in general, and more particularly on the famine situation in Bengal in regard to which his local knowledge was of course a great

help to him. He has done a first class job for my Information Department and the Ministry of Information and both are most grateful both to him and to the Government of India for sparing him to come here. I had an interesting conversation with him. It is a great pity, I think, that he left the I.C.S.

8. Your Anthology[4] reached me yesterday and I spent some very pleasant hours late in the evening browsing in it. It includes many of my own favourites, though naturally no two men will ever make the same collection. I am amazed at the amount you have been able to learn by heart.

[4] See No. 399, note 2.

420

Government of India, Commerce Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/220: f 63

NEW DELHI, *10 March 1944, 7.45 am*
Received: 10 March, 1.45 pm

No. 2690. Your telegram 27,612.[1] Government of India would welcome appointment of a High Commissioner for Canada in India on the basis of reciprocity and agree to your informing Canadian authorities accordingly.

His Excellency the Viceroy has seen.

[1] Of 2 December 1943. This tel. stated that there was reason to think the Canadian Government might be ready to propose appointing a High Commissioner in India if they felt the appointment would be welcomed. L/P&J/8/220.

421

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/109b: ff 46–8

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *10 March 1944, 10.30 am*
SECRET

237. My private telegram, 128 of 8th February.[1] Dominion Prime Ministers have been informed that H.M.G.'s suggestions for Agenda for Prime Ministers' Conference are as follows:—

(1) The immediate military situation.
(2) Questions arising from the conduct of the war against Japan, including the provision of forces from the British Commonwealth for that purpose and for policing of Europe after the defeat of Germany.

[1] No. 362.

(3) The post-war settlement, viz.
  (*a*) Political aspect, including nature of post-war world organisation, future of Germany, Italy and the Italian colonies, France and French Colonial Empire.
  (*b*) Defence aspect, including world security and international use of bases.
  (*c*) Regional arrangements, with special reference to policy in the Pacific.
(4) Questions affecting co-operation within the British Commonwealth after the war such as defence, transport and migration.

Comments of respective Prime Ministers have been invited and any suggestions for additional items. I will telegraph any consequent modifications as soon as I can.

2. Subject to any such modifications, you will see that it now seems less likely than I thought when telegraphing previously that such matters as civil aviation, post-war commercial policy etc. will be main or distinct items for discussion. Accordingly it is not at all certain to what extent Indian representatives will be invited to discussions with Dominion Prime Ministers. A great deal will depend on the final arrangements for conduct of these discussions, but I am most anxious that Kashmir and Noon should not arrive with the expectation that they will attend all meetings. The chances are, I think, that they may be invited for items (1) and (3) (*a*), i.e. for statements by Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary respectively on these topics, but not for at any rate all the discussions arising out of them, and there is a case for them to be associated with item (2) in respect of war against Japan, and 3 (*b*) and 3 (*c*) to the extent that these concern India. On item (4) Indian representatives would be concerned with transport and possibly migration, though migration is intended to be dealt with, I believe, in relation to European migration, and so far as it relates to Indians is a very thorny subject.

3. I should be grateful for your comments on the situation confronting us, but would be glad if you would not repeat not disclose the above agenda to Kashmir and Noon. At the same time it may be of use to you in its present form for the purpose of ensuring that Indian representatives are so far as possible briefed by the Government of India on points likely to come up under the items listed on which it may be desirable that they should expound India's point of view. As regards general lines of such briefs you will no doubt consult me.

422

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 306

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *11 March 1944, 1.45 pm*
SECRET *Received: 11 March, 12.15 pm*

No. 524–S. Your No. 5927.[1] Proposal has no real bearing whatever on India's main food problem. It does not increase by one ton India's total food supply and in fact apparently proposes that India should lend Ceylon rice for period without return. I cannot therefore consider this proposal until main question of imports for India is resolved.

2. I feel I must try once more to impress on His Majesty's Government psychological aspect of problem. Fact of bumper rice crop has little value if we cannot procure it and procure it at reasonable prices, while preventing hoarding and profiteering. This depends on producing confidence in ability of government to handle food situation and control prices. Principal weapon, without which we are almost powerless, is visible reserve of foodstuffs in hand of government or at its command from overseas. Without this our control cannot be successful and I fear that catastrophe will result.

3. Since present proposal does nothing to increase supply and any export of rice from India even in exchange would have adverse effect on confidence I regret that I cannot consider it until I know what total imports will be available and how rice procurement in Bengal proceeds. At present it is going badly.

[1] Of 10 March 1944. This tel. asked Lord Wavell for his views on the proposal, discussed in No. 413, that during the remaining 9 months of 1944 India should supply Ceylon with 300,000 tons of rice in exchange for the same quantity of wheat otherwise destined for Ceylon. During the first two or three months of this period exports of rice to Ceylon would exceed deliveries of wheat to India by possibly 20–30,000 tons. L/E/8/3323: ff 321–3. For a summary of the proposal see No. 419, para. 2.

423

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 305

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 March 1944*

244. 1. My 5927[1] of yesterday. Foodgrains.

2. I am very conscious that this may not seem to you a helpful contribution to your problem. I have strongly and continuously emphasised to my colleagues

[1] See No. 422, note 1.

that your difficulties are primarily those of procurement, caused by loss of public confidence and that estimates of supplies grown however accurate are no measure of these difficulties. I fear however that it is impossible to convince them that increase of 4½ million tons in rice crop over estimate put forward with your original demand is irrelevant. I feel sure that a completely negative reply to proposition now made will impose a still further handicap on the attempt to secure shipping for wheat imports at expense of military programme. On the other hand on present indications I am not confident that even acceptance of it would lead to that result being achieved. Emphasis in your 459–S[2] of March 3rd on point that wheat is now wanted for itself and not as substitute for rice and fact that quantities of rice proposed to be exported are very small in relation to Indian production lead my colleagues to regard as highly reasonable arrangement to make available over 200,000 tons of wheat in exchange for rice, though of course I have taken point that visible resumption of exports of rice, despite its abundance, will set back any revival of confidence in a country recently smitten by famine.

3. I have no doubt that everything possible is being done by way of propaganda to drive home the fact that rice crop really is abundant so as to promote confidence and get stocks on market, but I should like this point to be covered in your official reply, as I am frequently pressed to say what steps of this sort are being taken.

4. Please make no reference to this telegram in replying officially.

5. Your official telegram 524–S[3] has arrived whilst above was being encyphered. As it is not completely negative reply to proposition in my 5927 I will withhold it from Cabinet until Monday morning in case you think some amendment of it or addition to it is desirable in view of what is said above.

[2] No. 408; the date should be 4 March. [3] No. 422.

424

Secretary of State to Government of India, External Affairs Department

Telegram, L/P&S/12/2636: ff 95–7

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *11 March 1944, 2 am*

6020. Your Express Letter 24th December 1943 No. 875–S.[1] Status of the Agent-General at Washington.

Foreign Office agree that Agent-General should now be transformed into Minister independent of Ambassador and S/S for F[oreign] A[ffairs] and I propose now to submit joint Memorandum for approval by H.M.G. Foreign Office

however think it possible that if Minister were expressly accredited as representing *British* India, which would be logical corollary to para. 5 of your Express Letter, United States Government might make difficulties owing to fear that they might be exposed to criticism of countenancing in some way partition of India. They therefore suggest that Minister be accredited in respect of "India". As Minister will be accredited by the King, I see no legal objection and in any case, as F.O. point out, letter of credence hardly possesses rigidity of legal document.

2. If this suggestion is adopted, question arises whether nevertheless Ambassador should, as contemplated in directive, handle matters arising from exercise of functions of Crown in its relations with Indian States, in expectation that United States Administration will not make difficulties over this, or whether Minister should handle these matters under instructions from (a) Crown Representative, or (b) H.M.G. in communication with Crown Representative. Reason for suggestion that instructions should emanate from H.M.G. in communication with Crown Representative is that functions of Crown Representative under proviso to Section 2(1), Government of India Act and his Letters Patent, do not appear formally to extend outside India. I should be glad to have your views on these points in regard to which you will no doubt take into consideration view likely to be taken by Princes. I should myself be disposed to think that difficulty might be met by (1) a standing instruction from H.M.G. to Minister to accept as approved also for States and States subjects (Indian British protected persons) instructions from your Government expressed as concurred in by Crown Representative, and (2) an arrangement with Embassy that they should for the present handle personal matters affecting Indian Rulers and their families.

3. As regards directive, I would raise two points at this stage, (1) in para. 4 of your telegram of 22 Feb.[2] you propose that Minister should repeat to me only those reports which deal with matters of more than Indian domestic concern. I am inclined to think that all reports to External Affairs Department at any rate should be repeated here with exception of those dealing with unimportant matters of purely Indian interest; (2) in paragraph 7 (a) you contemplate that general publicity about India will be sole responsibility of Minister, who will be instructed by Government of India without reference to H.M.G. As you are aware it has recently been agreed, after special enquiry, that publicity in America on Indian questions requires most intimate co-operation between Agency-General and Embassy, and I would suggest therefore dealing with publicity separately in new sub-para. 7 (d) which would make clear that existing arrangements and instructions contained in your telegram 9286[3] of 29th October [1943] to Agent-General still stand. Responsibility for publicity about Indian States will require to be determined.

[1] No. 285. [2] L/P&S/12/2636: f 110. [3] L/I/1/809.

4. I should add that though I have not yet had comments from F.O. on directive, their general attitude is in support of view expressed in para. 4(2) of your Express Letter of 24th December that whatever the final form of directive, more exact definition of Minister's field of action must be left to evolution in practice of conventions agreed upon between Minister and Ambassador.

5. Question of publicity for this change, if approved, both here and in U.S.A. will require careful consideration, and I shall be glad to receive in due course any suggestions from you as to best line of presentation particularly to American public.[4]

[4] Tel. 3234 of 23 March from G. of I., External Affairs Dept. expressed general agreement with the proposals in paras. 1–3 of this tel. L/P&S/12/2636: f 83.

425

The Secretary, Government of India, Home Department to Mr Gandhi[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 162

No. II/4/44–M.S. NEW DELHI, *11 March 1944*

Sir,

In reply to your letter dated February 26th,[2] I am directed to say that Government do not think that any useful purpose would be served at present by publishing the correspondence in question. So far as Government are concerned, there is the statement in the Home Member's speech[3]—"Government have never at any time, either here or at home, charged the Congress with being pro-Japanese". They do not see how this can be regarded as "Government persistence in making charges and innuendoes against Congress people". So far as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru is concerned, I am again to refer you to para. 2 of my letter of October 14th, 1943,[4] in which it was made clear that he did not, in his public statement, repudiate the words in the Congress Responsibility pamphlet[5] to which you took exception in paragraph 18 of your letter of July 15th, 1943.[6] There can, therefore, be no question of Government's having made use of that passage after his repudiation of it.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient servant,

R. TOTTENHAM
Additional Secretary to the Govt. of India

[1] This letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), p. 117.

[2] No. 403. [3] See No. 403, note 2. [4] See No. 188, note 2. [5] Cmd. 6430.

[6] See No. 51, note 1.

426

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *12 March 1944, 5.40 pm*
Received: 12 March, 2.45 pm

No. 535–S. Your telegram No. 244[1] of 11th March. Foodgrains. I can add little to my No. 524–S[2] and certainly cannot amend it.

2. While statistics show large rice crop there is no carry-over from last year's crop which was bad. Carry-over may normally be as large as twenty-five per cent. of crop equivalent to four and a half million tons in areas Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam. Producers will certainly attempt to keep normal carry-over from this year's crop. Bengal Government have so far procured only 144,000 tons against target of 1,150,000 tons. Casey believes crop has been unusually slow in coming forward and that he will be able to procure 600,000 tons in all by steady buying during next five months and that this will see deficit districts through. But he is still asking for rice from other Provinces. In these conditions export of rice from India is quite impossible. We are in fact publicly pledged not to export and I could never get Executive Council to agree in present conditions. I might possibly be able to do so later in year if all went well and public confidence was quite restored.

3. Casey is doing all he can about publicity but with Press against Ministry and public confidence badly shaken by events of last year and hostile propaganda he will need time to produce results.

4. I can only warn His Majesty's Government once again that I do not believe serious disaster in India which will reflect itself on troops and military situation can be averted without very substantial imports of wheat.[3]

[1] No. 423. [2] No. 422.

[3] In tel. 251 of 13 March, Mr Turnbull informed Sir E. Jenkins that for purposes of dealing with other Ministers, paras. 2–4 of No. 426 had been incorporated into No. 422 as paras. 4–6. This enabled a full statement of Lord Wavell's views to be circulated without disclosure of No. 423. The reply to No. 422 when sent would therefore cover both Nos. 422 and 426. L/PO/10/18.

427

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/109b: f 45

IMPORTANT
PRIVATE

NEW DELHI, *12 March 1944, 11.15 pm*
Received: 12 March, 10.45 pm

No. 536–S. Your private telegram No. 237[1] of 10th March. Prime Ministers' Conference. Noon is being briefed on lines indicated in your telegram No. 128[2] of 8th February. I do not see how I can brief him or Kashmir from here on (? items) (2), 3(b), 3(c) and (4), but will speak to them on very general lines when I see them before departure. I have already warned them that they will not attend all meetings, only those for general statements of the war position and those in which India is specially concerned. I am sure you will see that they are brought into all conferences that really concern India and are made to feel that India is regarded as a partner in the Commonwealth whose views on her interests will be given due weight.

[1] No. 421. [2] No. 362.

428

Mr Mudie to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/179: f 210

SECRET

BIHAR'S GOVERNOR'S CAMP, *13 March 1944*

D.O. No. 207–G.B.

3. The Arakan news[1] has certainly done something to counter the stories of a British defeat in that area. But there is a class of people who, associating the Cripps offer with the fall of Malaya and Burma, think that the only thing that would end the "deadlock" and compel Government to agree to a transference of power now would be a severe British reverse in the East. These people, of course, unlike Gandhi in 1942, assume an ultimate British victory.

[1] In February 1944, Japanese forces began a counter-offensive in Arakan aimed at Chittagong. By the end of the month, Allied troops had forced the Japanese to break up and retreat into the jungle.

429

Sir J. Colville (Bombay) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/623: f 146

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMBAY, *13 March 1944*

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL

D.O. No. 14

My Dear Wavell,

Tottenham has asked for our suggestions about future arrangements for Gandhi in detention, and my Home Department has just replied suggesting various alternatives. I am writing this letter because I feel that one of the alternatives proposed raises large issues. It is clear that some of the women now in the Aga Khan's Palace should go away, as they were only brought to keep Mrs Gandhi company. The case for Dr. Gilder's further detention will shortly come up for review, and I think it is likely that, on the tests we are trying to apply to all detenus, he might be released. The entourage will, therefore, be much reduced, and we should consider whether it is desirable to leave Gandhi in this large and rather depressing palace or to move him elsewhere. Iengar has suggested that he might be moved to the Fort of Ahmednagar, where he would be with the Working Committee. This could, no doubt, be done on humanitarian grounds without suggesting any change of policy, but it might, though this is open to much doubt, result in an early move to modify the August Resolution and an attempt to come to terms with Government. I have been thinking how this would affect me in this Province—and I can only speak from the point of view of Bombay, which, as you know, is very Congress-minded and highly developed politically. If a Congress Ministry came in here now, they might retard the work which we have been able to do with a Section 93 Government. I do not think, however, that they could upset rationing and food control arrangements, as public opinion is too strongly behind these measures. They might interfere with our Post-War Plan, which is designed to give preference to the recruiting districts, though here, again, these districts happen to be those in greatest need of land development and there is a dual reason for concentrating on them. But the most important question of all is whether they would interfere with the war effort, either in matters of production of munitions or the fulfilment of Military requirements both for training and the mounting of operations. Here, I confess that I would rather be left with a Section 93 Government, for the next year at any rate, and I think you would get the same reply from every Provincial Governor similarly situated. That, however, is the short view, and there is a long view which, though it is not really my Provincial concern, yet gives me anxiety. The detenus must come out some day, and Congress as a political party cannot be conjured away but must be reckoned with. It seems

to me that if we wait till the end of the war before allowing the leaders to reconsider their position together, the situation would be extremely difficult; and committed, as we are, to allowing India, one day, a free choice whether she will remain in the Empire or not, we stand a good chance of losing her.

2. The problem is indeed difficult, as one of the greatest risks is that any move at the present time might dishearten all those good people who have supported the war effort while Congress obstructed. Yet I feel that, taking the long view, the move of Gandhi to Ahmednagar would be a step in the right direction.

3. Please forgive me for going far outside my book. This letter does not expect a detailed answer, but I felt that one of the courses suggested by my Home Department raises such wide issues that I wanted to comment on it.[1]

Yours sincerely,

JOHN COLVILLE

[1] Lord Wavell acknowledged this letter in his No. 125 (21) GG/43 of 21 March 1944. He explained that the whole matter was being considered by his Home Department in correspondence with the Government of Bombay, and he was very glad to have Sir J. Colville's personal comments. L/P&J/8/623.

430

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, KARACHI, *14 March 1944*

I have just received your letters of the 17th[1] and 24th/25th[2] February. They were written while you were still convalescent. Butler wrote to me about his doings during your absence, and I have replied.[3] Food imports and the Attachment Bill were his main preoccupations.

2. The food imports business is still most unsatisfactory, and I thought very little indeed of the War Cabinet's last suggestion[4] for the export of rice to Ceylon in exchange for an equivalent quantity of wheat—especially as India would have to find the rice, or a great deal of it, first, and would receive the wheat much later. It is clear that the War Cabinet have not begun to understand the nature of our problem, and apparently do not even care to try. In my recent telegrams[5] I have tried to give you the material I think you will need, but you already know the position and I need not go over it again now.

My last telegram[6] was based in part on a report[7] which I had been expecting for some days from Casey, of which I received a telephone summary on the 12th March. The Bengal Government have so far been able to procure only 144,300 tons against their programme of 1,150,000 tons. Casey thinks that

this programme was too large; with a good crop the needs of the deficit districts are rather less than they would normally be, and he believes that if he can lay his hands on a total of 600,000 tons he will be able to feed the deficit districts. For various reasons, but largely because of holding by the cultivators, the crop has been unusually slow in coming forward to the markets. In a normal year about half of it would, I understand, have got to the markets by now, but this year Casey thinks that not more than one-fourth has been marketed. If this is right, there should be a fairly steady flow of rice into the markets until next August, and from this flow the Bengal Government hope to make up the lower total of 600,000 tons. Casey seems fairly optimistic, but he still wants all the rice he can get from other Provinces, and Calcutta is still to be fed from outside. He is planning requisitioning from the larger growers at least; but requisitioning in Bengal will be a very tricky business indeed. In these conditions you will understand that it is quite impossible for us to export rice at all: we have in fact publicly pledged ourselves not to do so, and there would be a storm of protest from all parties if my Government agreed to exports, which in my opinion they certainly would not do. I have said over and over again that statistics in this country are misleading and my experts point out that although the present crop is a very good one, last year's crop was bad, and the cultivators will legitimately want to hold a normal carry-over. This means roughly that the difference between the yield of the present crop and that of abnormal [? a normal] crop is not likely to come to the markets at all. I hope the War Cabinet will take a reasonable line: you know that I regard this question of food imports as vital.

I have already apologised[8] for Mountbatten's discussion of our problem with Stilwell. The letter telling Mountbatten not to approach Stilwell was delivered before he left New Delhi, and he either did not read it or forgot about it. However, Stilwell did not report to Washington and I hope no serious harm has been done. Sooner or later the Americans have got to know the situation, since supplies to their troops and the whole security of India as a base depend on it. If His Majesty's Government cannot find the necessary shipping, it seems to me that they must in fairness to the Americans acquaint them with the position. It will be better that the statement should go from London to Washington than from Stilwell. Meantime critical weeks and months are being wasted.

3. I have telegraphed[9] to you about the discussion in Council, on the increase in Railway fares. Benthall met with opposition from all parties in the Assembly, and Government lost the division on a motion reducing the appropriation for

[1] No. 389. [2] No. 399.
[3] This correspondence has not been traced in India Office Records. [4] See No. 422, note 1.
[5] See Nos. 402, 408, 422, and 426. [6] No. 426. [7] Dated 11 March 1944. L/E/8/3340.
In tel. 521–S of 10 March. L/PO/10/25. [9] Tel. 523–S of 11 March. L/PO/10/18.

Railway reserve by Rs. 10 crores, the estimated yield of the increase.[10] An opposition member then put down a question, to be answered on the 13th March, asking for information on the action Government propose to take.[11] Benthall brought the matter up in Council, and recommended, with support from Raisman, that a non-committal reply should be given to the question, and that we should consider action after the debates on the Budget and the Finance Bill. Benthall and Raisman made it clear that they thought the increase should be maintained. The majority of Members held very strongly that the increase was a mistake and should be abandoned. Some Members favoured an immediate announcement to this effect, but the majority agreed that a non-committal reply to the question would be best, and that the announcement about railway fares could be made more appropriately towards the end of the Session. I think it almost certain that my colleagues will not change their views, though Raisman will try to persuade them to do so when the matter comes up again. They might be satisfied with a reduction in the increase from 25 to 12½ per cent. but I cannot be sure of this. The opposition is mainly factious, but is partly caused by the bad conditions of travel and a feeling that the Railways with a large surplus ought to have improved matters long ago; and therefore that the "poor Indian is being exploited for war purposes". There is a good deal of public feeling about this, apart from politics.

4. I have telegraphed[12] to you also about the briefing of Firoz Khan Noon and His Highness of Kashmir for the War Cabinet meetings. Firoz Khan Noon was already being briefed on the subjects mentioned in an earlier telegram[13] from you, which were largely of an economic character. The subjects actually included in the agenda are much wider, and as I have told you in my telegram I do not think satisfactory briefs on them can be given here. I will do my best to give Firoz Khan Noon and Kashmir some general ideas before they leave, and you will no doubt see that they are given as interesting a time as possible.

5. The visit of Indian industrialists to the United Kingdom and the United States is another matter on which we have recently exchanged telegrams.[14] I think His Majesty's Government would be quite wrong to be cautious or half-hearted about this. I do not know if we shall get any very striking results from the mission—if the men selected go at their own expense and are merely pledged in an informal way to let us have a joint report of some kind in return for the travel facilities and the secretarial help we shall give them, we cannot expect any formal or elaborate documents to be produced. On the other hand cordial personal contacts between leading Indian businessmen and their opposite numbers at home can do nothing but good. I quite admit that if the people at home are too busy to make much of the Indian visitors, Indian interest may be diverted to the United States; but this may well happen in any case, and

censorship shows how American interest in India and its commercial possibilities is growing. I agree with you that the next few months may be uncomfortable in London and in the United Kingdom generally for people who are not accustomed to air raids and air raid alerts, but a summer visit would in many ways be very much better than a visit, say, next November when war conditions may still persist, and the climate and the blackout would be particularly depressing to Indians. It will not be a bad thing for them to see what even a minor blitz is like, and how London takes it.

6. B. P. Singh Roy has finally refused the Australian High Commissionership, and I have authorised Azizul Haque to offer the appointment to Shanmukham Chetty. I met Shanmukham Chetty at Coimbatore; he was, as you know, at one time President of the Central Legislative Assembly, and later Dewan of Cochin. On leaving Cochin he was appointed the first non-official head of the Indian Supply Mission in Washington, and returned to India and resigned when the Grady Mission[15] came here. I am told that he never explained the grounds for his resignation, but it is suspected that he did not get on with Bajpai. He has a family business—a textile mill—in Coimbatore, and is now working in it. I am not sure whether he will be attracted by the Australian appointment, but I have been told that he is prepared to enter public life again when he gets a suitable opportunity. He is a better candidate than Raza Ali, another of the possibles, who would like the appointment but is now rather past his best.

7. I have had my talk with Azizul Haque, Khare, Mudaliar, and Sultan Ahmed, about the departmental responsibility for Indian High Commissioners in the Dominions and for relations with Dominion High Commissioners here. My colleagues all thought it would be a mistake to place Dominions relations in the External Affairs Department. They pointed out that the External Affairs Department is generally regarded as a department dealing only with foreign countries, and that the extension of its activities to the Dominions would be unpopular and probably unsound. I told them I was quite prepared to accept this view. Eventually there will, I suppose, be an External Affairs Department with a Foreign section and an Empire or Commonwealth section included in it, and an Indian Member in charge. For the present it seems to me that High Commissioners and their affairs should be under the Indians Overseas Department, which is the germ of the Commonwealth section of the External Affairs Department, rather than under the Commerce Department. I have sent you a telegram[16] asking your advice. Azizul Haque does not agree with me, but

[10] See *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. I, 1944, 24 February 1944, pp. 503–22.
[11] See *Ibid.*, vol. II, 1944, 13 March 1944, pp. 966–7. [12] No. 427. [13] No. 362.
[14] Nos. 238 and 540–S of 11 and 13 March. L/E/8/3605.
[15] The American Technical Mission to India April–May 1942; see Vol. II, Nos. 69, 82 etc.
[16] See No. 414, note 5.

Khare is of course very pleased; and I think the other Members are indifferent as long as the business is not transferred to the External Affairs Department.

8. I am now clear that I need an additional Member of Council for planning and development, and have telegraphed[17] asking you to agree to this new Membership. Departments are now busy on their plans—it seems better to start with more or less definite proposals for the various subjects to be dealt with than to attempt to lay down the law on statistics and other information which are almost certainly inaccurate. As the departmental plans come in, they will have to be co-ordinated and made into a coherent plan covering the whole field. This will be a very big task, and a really able man is needed to carry it out. He would probably have to take on Research and all statistical work connected with planning. I will telegraph my views about the selection later.

9. Gandhi is beginning to correspond actively with the Government of India again. He has just sent the Home Department two letters complaining about their handling of Mrs Gandhi's illness,[18] and asking to be transferred to an ordinary prison.[19] On the letter about Mrs Gandhi's illness, I have given instructions for a brief and courteous reply to be sent. We may have been wrong in not offering to release Mrs Gandhi—I have never been quite satisfied about this—but Gandhi really has no valid complaint about the medical attention provided, and I am quite satisfied that everything possible was done for Mrs Gandhi. On the second letter we are waiting for a report from the Government of Bombay before drafting a reply.

A few days ago Radha Kant Malaviya, a son of Madan Mohan Malaviya, called on Tottenham and suggested that he should be allowed to visit Gandhi, with Sastri, Jayakar and Radhakrishnan, in order to persuade him to withdraw the August Resolution. As Radha Kant's object was evidently not to break with Gandhi if he refused to withdraw the Resolution, but to give an opportunity for fruitless argument and discussion, I agreed with Maxwell that permission should be refused.

[Para. 10, on the Maharaja of Jodhpur, omitted.]

11. This letter is written from Karachi where I arrived on the 13th March. I go on to Sukkur, via Jacobabad, on the 15th March, and return to New Delhi, again via Jacobabad, on the 16th.

[17] Tel. 66-S.C. of 13 March. L/E/8/4490. [18] See No. 417, note 5.

[19] Mr Gandhi's letter of 4 March is printed in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, p. 299.

431

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *16 March 1944*
Received: 25 March

We got through the Kathiawar Bill on Tuesday night, so far as the House of Commons is concerned, and the Royal Assent will be given on Tuesday,[1] on the assumption that the Lords will accept a small defining amendment which I introduced in the Commons. I don't suppose we shall hear much of the matter again over here and I can only hope that the thing can now be straightened out locally with the minimum of trouble and delay. The matter of the protest[2] of the Chamber of Princes, about which I feared there might be trouble, has not attracted attention here. If I had been asked, I should have replied that it was based entirely on a misconception of the purpose of the Bill, which does not purport to legislate for the States, but only to rectify your own position as Crown Representative, and restore it to what everyone assumed it to be till the other day.

2. I confess I was very sorry to get your telegram[3] saying that you did not think you could do anything about the proposed exchange of rice from this year's abundant crop for wheat which would otherwise go to Ceylon. Naturally I have stressed the whole problem of procurement to the Cabinet Committee, but nothing will make them see the difficulties at your end and they cannot get out of their minds the feeling that more effective measures could be taken in India to extract surpluses wherever they exist. In any case, their minds are naturally dominated by the urgency of the military situation and by the conviction that only the success of the Second Front and the other operations connected with it will shorten the war and so relieve the Indian problem. It is of course true that if this summer saw Germany knocked out the whole shipping situation would be relieved to an extent which would enable supplies, not only of food, but of many other urgently needed articles to be sent to India. Though even there we are likely to be faced with a very serious European famine situation and you may have to face a position eventually in which it will no longer be a case of wheat being available for India if only the Government would release shipping, but of ships being available, and no wheat. Meanwhile I can only trust that the Chiefs of Staff will be helpful in reporting the matter to the Cabinet and that Stilwell will have lent a sympathetic ear to

[1] The India (Attachment of States) Act 1944, 7 & 8 Geo. 6 ch. 14, received the Royal Assent on 21 March.

[2] No. 395. [3] No. 422; see also No. 426.

Mountbatten's arguments. I won't say more at the moment and can only hope that this letter may be overtaken by more cheerful telegrams.

3. I am sure it will be an excellent thing that Raisman should have the opportunity of discussing matters with the Treasury and with the Indian Finance Committee over here. It might also, as I have suggested by telegram,[4] be most useful if he went over to America for a short trip to clinch outstanding issues like silver and also to come back to India with the added authority of being able to speak at first hand of his contacts with the American Departments.

4. The Inter-Imperial Official Committee on Post-War Economics has been going on for the last few weeks, and I believe their report has now been completed. The whole thing is ludicrously unreal, depending as it does on the world as a whole accepting the economic control of a number of inter-connected international committees, the whole thing based on the fundamentally false assumption that the maximum of international trade intercourse is equivalent to the maximum of prosperity. Nothing can possibly come of it all and the discussions here were deprived of all reality by the simple fact that nobody had the nerve to ask the question whether these fancy schemes were either desirable or possible, but simply confined themselves to detailed suggestions for their improvement. It is all on a par with Hans Andersen's story of the Emperor's new clothes, in which the Emperor went in procession in his shirt, wearing the wonderful embroidered garment that a fraud had pretended to make for him, nobody daring to criticise until a child called out: "Why has the Emperor got no clothes on?" Mudaliar is perfectly right in saying that India had much better get ahead with its own economic plans and pay no attention to these discussions.[5] If India has a policy it can always be dovetailed into an Empire policy or a world policy to whatever extent India may wish. Wasting time waiting for an imaginary policy, which is never going to materialise and probably would not suit India if it did, seems to me just foolishness. I see no reason why in that respect India should follow the example of this country.

5. I have seen copies of your correspondence[6] in December last with the Jam Sahib to which you referred in paragraph 9 of your letter of the 22nd December.[7] I wrote to you about this and the point raised in paragraph 3 of your letter of 29th December[8] in my letter of 21st January.[9] I suppose that when Kashmir arrives here he may be found to have been primed by his brother Princes to express some of the disquietude among them about our policy to which the Jam Sahib refers. It would be helpful to know, if possible in advance of his arrival, what line you thought fit to take in discussion with Bhopal, the new Chancellor, during the meeting of the Standing Committee which I understand is to be held this month.

[Para. 6, on a postal record scheme for British troops in India, omitted.]

7. I have just received your letter of March 7th.[10] I am glad you were favourably impressed with Twynam. All I have seen of his letters to Linlithgow has made me feel that he knows his job and has a mind of his own. I shall look forward with great interest to his appreciation, and even more to yours. Hope, too, in spite of certain failings you know of has evidently got to know his province and to make himself liked. The question of his succession will have to be faced before very long.

8. I confess I am not at all happy, from the point of view of the impression in Australia, about making the Australian High Commissioner, even nominally, attached to the Department of Indians Overseas. Roses do smell much sweeter under attractive names, and I should have thought it was not impossible to anticipate Mackay's arrival by rechristening the Department that of Commonwealth Affairs or Relations. Apart from such a title being more acceptable to the Australians, it ought also to begin to make Indians think of their relations to the rest of the Empire from a broader point of view than that of merely looking after Indians and remedying their grievances. I am sure Mackenzie King, who has held up an exchange of High Commissioners hitherto mainly for fear of the question of the votes of a handful of Sikhs in British Columbia, would be scared to death if he thought his Canadian High Commissioner in India came under the Department of Indians Overseas and would consequently be at once tackled on that question.

9. You have certainly been most helpful to Casey over getting some sort of an efficient administration together. There is certainly this to be said for not having embarked on Section 93: and that is that if things had gone wrong for want of a competent administrative staff we should have had the worst of both worlds, whereas once the administration is keyed up, if Section 93 becomes necessary it at any rate starts with a fair chance of success.

10. I liked the cartoon of your Executive. I also quite understand why you had doubts[11] about patting them on the back quite as effusively as I had suggested in connection with your speech to the Assembly.

11. I have not been surprised to see the reaction of Indian politicians to the repeal of the Chinese Exclusion Act in the United States.[12] When Bajpai proposed that he should make a formal approach to the State Department for parallel treatment to Indians I felt inclined to agree, especially as the gesture would have been valuable in meeting public opinion in India. I took the precaution, however, of consulting the Foreign Office, who, while concurring

[4] 254 of 14 March. L/PO/10/18. [5] See No. 401, para. 6. [6] Nos. 251 and 273.
[7] No. 278. [8] No. 287. [9] No. 338. [10] No. 414. [11] See No. 381, para. 6.
[12] See No. 285, note 4.

in principle, felt that, at least for the time being, it would be well to go slow. I see that Bajpai reports[13] that the State Department are not in favour of a formal approach until they are in a position to follow it up with legislation. The feeling of the Foreign Office was that discussion on such a Bill might tend more to offer an opportunity for certain elements opposed to it in principle to make diversionary attacks on our policy in India, and perhaps on that of some of the Dominions, than to achieve the end we desire. The Foreign Office indeed apprehend that the opposition might be so substantial as to compel withdrawal of the bill, in which case our last state would be worse than our first. I hope that the Foreign Office's apprehensions may prove to be exaggerated, but it seems in all the circumstances that there is nothing to be gained by precipitate action in the matter. I would accordingly accept Bajpai's advice and hope that you may be able to arm off critics on the ground that pressure of war business in Washington is not likely to permit legislation being undertaken for some time to come.

[13] In tel. 36 of 21 January 1944 to the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. repeated to the Secretary of State as tel. 4 of 25 January. L/P&J/8/322.

432

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 165

L/E/8/3323: ff 269–73

Economic Situation in India

REPORT BY THE CHIEFS OF STAFF

WAR CABINET OFFICES, S.W.1, *18 March 1944*

1. We have examined certain telegrams from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India and a minute[1] from the Secretary of State for India to the Prime Minister, and, after consultation with the India Office and the Ministry of War Transport, we forward the following report.

WHEAT REQUIREMENT

2. In his cable of 4th March[2] the Viceroy states:—

[*There follows the decipher of para. 3 of No. 408*]

A cable dated 11th March, 1944,[3] from the Government of India Food Department to the Secretary of State for India states:—

> "Lack of confidence persists and position in East Bengal is far from satisfactory. Flow of rice and paddy to markets remains substantially less than normal. Producers are holding and prospect of large scale requisitioning is looming closer."

3. The principal requirement put forward by the Viceroy is for wheat, and a preliminary review of the 1944 estimates shows that, in addition to an irreducible Military demand for 724,000 tons, deficit areas, particularly large towns, and essential services, such as railways, collieries and factories require 800,000 tons. The total gross wheat deficiency is therefore of the order of 1,524,000 tons for 1944.

MINIMUM BALANCE TO BE IMPORTED

4. Reference to the figures in the Annex attached to this report shows that the deficit required to be made good by imports amounts to 484,000 tons, of which provision has so far been made for 50,000 tons.

5. Procurement of surplus stores from Indian producers entirely depends on the confidence of the country in the Government's ability to control the situation. The Viceroy has said that it will be impossible, unless imports of wheat or other food grains are forthcoming in adequate quantities, to maintain the confidence necessary to prevent hoarding and inflation. In such an event procurement of surplus stocks will not be possible, with the result that the deficit required to be made good by imports will be substantially increased. Moreover, in such an event:—

(a) Defence Services could not be supplied.
(b) Essential Services such as railways and factories would fail.
(c) Production of coal would be seriously affected.
(d) Widespread famine would result in deficit areas.

6. In recent telegrams[4] the Commander-in-Chief, INDIA and Supreme Allied Commander SOUTH EAST ASIA Command have emphasised the importance on strategical grounds of securing INDIA'S wheat position. A second famine might have a serious effect on the morale of the Indian Army and on the security of INDIA as a whole, while it would undoubtedly react on the capacity of the ASSAM Lines of Communication to nourish the air lift to CHINA and operations in BURMA.

7. The provision of wheat for India is therefore a military requirement of great strategical importance. This wheat can be made available in Australia, so that the problem is one of shipping. A possible method by which shipping can be found to meet this requirement is by making a corresponding reduction in the revised SEXTANT[5] allocation of tonnage for military maintenance programmes.

[1] Annex I to No. 413. [2] [Note in original:] No. 459–S of 4th March, 1944.
[3] [Note in original:] No. 2725 of 11th March, 1944 [i.e. the fifty-first weekly telegram on the food position in India. L/E/8/3307].
[4] [Note in original:] 58587/C.O.S. from General Auchinleck and SEACOS 95 from Admiral Mountbatten [i.e. Nos. 386 and 384].
[5] See No. 210, note 1.

REDUCTION IN MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME

8. Maintenance requirements have therefore been re-examined in the light of developments since the SEXTANT conference. Operational demands and wastage in theatres other than Italy have not been heavy and changes in the strategical situation have made it possible to reduce reserve holdings more than had been expected so that maintenance requirements have fallen. Moreover, the heavy demands and high priority accorded to OVERLORD[6] requirements have imposed restrictions on the amount of material and equipment available for despatch to overseas commands, while the uncertainties about future developments in S.E.A.C. have resulted in a reduction in the anticipated flow of equipment to India.

9. An overall reduction in maintenance programmes generally is therefore already taking place and in consequence a reduction can be made in the SEXTANT allocations for the second quarter of the year which, it is estimated, should amount to some 8 sailings a month or say 25 ships over the quarter. If an equivalent allocation were made to carry wheat from Australia to India some 200,000 tons could be imported without interfering with other approved programmes.

10. In his telegram[7] of 4th March, the Viceroy states that the Commander-in-Chief INDIA and the Supreme Allied Commander SOUTH EAST ASIA Command have offered to forgo 10% of military imports into INDIA in order to provide shipping space for wheat. The Viceroy estimates that this would give INDIA some 120,000 tons of wheat in 12 months.

THE VICEROY'S REQUIREMENTS

11. The release of ships from maintenance programmes shipped from North America and the United Kingdom would not enable the Ministry of War Transport to make available ships to load immediately in Australia, and some delay would have to be accepted while ships were worked into position, during which time detailed arrangements could be worked out for the arrival of the ships in India. The Viceroy in his cable[8] dated 11th March 1944, has stated that the procuring of the rice crop at reasonable prices and the preventing of hoarding and profiteering—

[*There follows the decipher of para. 2 of No. 422 from 'depends on producing confidence' to the end.*]

The knowledge that this contribution of 200,000 tons of wheat would arrive in India during the second and third quarters of 1944 should help to keep confidence steady in India, but does not obviate the necessity of making good the balance of 234,000 tons (See Annex).

12. A proposal has also been made to load small quantities of wheat in ships sailing from North America to India. This could probably be done as dead-

weight cargo or (bagged) in broken stowage without displacing other essential cargo. This would have distinct propaganda value in India and North America and might enable some further advantage to be taken of the Canadian offer of wheat for India. There are supply difficulties involved, but we suggest that the proposal be approved in principle subject to such difficulties being solved.

CONCLUSION

13. If 25 ships are released from military maintenance programmes now and reallocated in Australia as soon as possible, we can provide 200,000 tons of wheat towards the deficit of 430,000 tons required to be made good by imports. This is not a complete solution but we cannot make any proposals for the latter part of the year, since the shipping allocations for that period have not yet been fixed. The requirement to be met during the second half of the year would be much reduced if the U.S. Military authorities found that they were able to make from shipping allocated to them a contribution similar in size to that outlined above.

14. The India Office are satisfied that the tonnage involved can be handled at the ports and that the necessary internal distribution can take place in connection with the whole problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

15. We recommend that:

(a) In view of reduced requirements the allocation of shipping for military maintenance programmes should be reduced by 25 ships during the period April to June and the Ministry of War Transport should be invited to make available equivalent capacity for loading in the second and third quarters of 1944, for the carriage of 200,000 tons of wheat to India.

(b) The U.S. Military authorities should be approached with a view to their making a similar contribution in shipping.

(c) The proposal to ship small quantities of wheat to India in deadweight or in stowage should be approved in principle, subject to supply difficulties being solved.

(d) The shipping necessary to provide the cereals for the minimum maintenance requirements in India should be tabulated in future as a military requirement.

(Signed) A. F. BROOKE
C. PORTAL
ANDREW CUNNINGHAM

6 See No. 384, note 1. 7 [Note in original:] No. 459-S of 4th March, 1944.
8 [Note in original:] No. 524-S of 11th March, 1944.

Annex to No. 432

INDIA'S WHEAT SITUATION

A. Military requirements	724,000 tons		
B. Deficiency on Civil requirements	800,000 tons		
Total deficiency			1,524,000 tons
C. Possible methods of meeting deficiency:—			
(i) Estimated surplus from producing areas		640,000 tons	
(ii) Reduction of the Civil ration by two ounces per caput		100,000 tons	
(iii) Use of Barley, Grain [? Gram] and Millets in lieu of Wheat		150,000 tons	
(iv) Possible additional surplus stocks to be obtained from Provinces		150,000 tons	1,040,000 tons
D. Deficit required to be made good by imports			484,000
E. Provision so far authorised by the Cabinet			50,000
F. Balance for which imports must be arranged			434,000 tons

433

Note of an Informal Meeting of the Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements[1]

L/E/8/3323: ff 267–8

Those present at this meeting held in the Committee Room, India Office, on 20 March 1944 at 3 pm were: Mr Amery (in the Chair), Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin

Also present were: Colonel Oliver Stanley, The Earl of Munster, Sir D. Monteath, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, Mr G. H. Baxter, Mr A. Dibdin, Mr T. Wilson, Mr H. A. F. Rumbold

The Chairman referred to the report[2] by the Chiefs of Staff which, in accordance with the Prime Minister's direction, would be considered at the Cabinet meeting that evening and said he had thought it desirable to have a preliminary discussion of the recommendations made. The report was reasonable and met the Viceroy's minimum requirements. He earnestly hoped that the question of

the replacement of Ceylon wheat with rice from India might be left over so that the Cabinet meeting could concentrate on the report.

Lord Leathers said that before he could accept the Chiefs of Staff recommendations he must be clear that the reference in recommendation (a) was to 25 ships in addition to the 40 already released and that he would not be asked to make up the shortage in military shipments later in the year. The quantity which would have been carried in these ships must be definitely abandoned by the military. He felt it a great pity that the Ceylon exchange could not be made and he would like to make it conditional to the acceptance of the recommendations of the Chiefs of Staff.

Colonel Llewellin emphasised that if Ceylon is to receive all the rice she needs and none could be made available from India it would mean that the Middle East and the U.K. would have to go short. He agreed with Lord Leathers' suggestion that the exchange should be made a condition.

The Chairman said he would be quite prepared to push the Viceroy as hard as possible on this proposal but he was convinced that it would be an absolute mistake to make it a condition. India had had a famine and upwards of $\frac{3}{4}$ m. people had died, a number of people were living on the verge of starvation. Procurement depended on the restoration of confidence and it would increase the Viceroy's difficulties, if not make it impossible for him to carry out his procurement plans, if exports of rice were made.

Discussion then turned on the interpretation of recommendation (d). The Chairman said that in his view this recommendation, read in conjunction with paragraph 11, meant that provision would be made in the military shipping programme as a priority requirement for further shipments of 230,000 tons of wheat in the second half of 1944 and Sir D. Monteath confirmed that this had been made clear at the P[rincipal] A[dministrative] O[fficers'] meeting.[3] Lord Leathers said he was not prepared to discuss subsequent requirements and he felt that India would be embarrassed by wheat as a result of the shipment contemplated under (a).

Lord Leathers said with regard to recommendation (c) that it was quite erroneous to suppose that small quantities of wheat could be shipped to India in military store ships. Apart altogether from the difficulties of railing and bagging the proposed shipments, the ships were always "down" before fully loaded. There was no slack whatever.

1 A note by Mr France on the file copy states: 'Agreed with Wiltshire. Not to be copied or circulated.'
2 No. 432.
3 This body reported to the Chiefs of Staff on 16 March 1944. Its report was the same as No. 432 except for minor differences in para. 15(c). L/E/8/3323.

434

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 36th Conclusions, Minute 4

R/30/1/4: ff 63–6

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W. 1, on 20 March 1944 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of item 4 were: Mr S. M. Bruce, Mr W. Nash, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Cunningham, Marshal of the Royal Air Force Sir Charles F. A. Portal, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke

INDIA

Food Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 23rd Conclusions, Minute 6)[1]

The War Cabinet at their meeting on the 21st February had approved certain proposals of the Indian Food Grain Requirements Committee[2] for dealing with the requests of the Viceroy for the continued importation of food grains. They now had before them—

(*a*) copies of further telegraphic correspondence with the Viceroy, who continued to urge the psychological importance of substantial imports, and was averse from finding rice for Ceylon until the main question of imports for India had been resolved;

(*b*) a Report by the Chiefs of Staff (W.P. (44) 165),[3] who recommended—

(i) that, in view of reduced requirements, the allocation of shipping for military maintenance programmes should be reduced by 25 ships during the period April to June, and that the Ministry of War Transport should be invited to make available the equivalent capacity in the second and third quarters of 1944 for the carriage of 200,000 tons of wheat to India;

(ii) that the United States military authorities should be approached with a view to their making a similar contribution in shipping;

(iii) that the proposal to ship small quantities of wheat to India in dead-weight or in stowage should be approved in principle, subject to supply difficulties being solved;

(iv) that the shipping necessary to provide the cereals for the minimum maintenance requirements in India should be tabulated in future as a military requirement.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that on the latest figures available there was statistically a surplus of food grains in India. But it was clear from the Viceroy's messages that, despite abundant harvests, the need for imported wheat on psychological grounds remained. He was ready, therefore, to transport 200,000 tons of wheat to India, but on the understanding that the 25 ships required would be additional to the ships that had already been released and transferred to other operational uses, and that the Army would not ask for this released quantity to be made good later this year. He was averse from asking the United States War Department to make a cut in their military cargo shipments to India, and thought that no commitment to India should now be made beyond the 200,000 tons. He had had expert examination made of the suggestion that bagged wheat should be included in the cargoes of ships loading for the East coast of India, and was satisfied that for technical reasons it was impracticable.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA urged very strongly that the Viceroy should be given the full amount of 434,000 tons for which he was now pressing. The psychological aspect of this matter was of first-class importance. Nearly three-quarters of a million lives had been lost through famine and its sequels. Unless there was general confidence that there was no risk of recurrence nothing could prevent the peasant in 750,000 villages holding back his small parcel of grain, with the result of famine or at least famine prices. Whatever crop estimates might be, it was only grain actually procured and under Government control that was available for distribution or exchange. It was essential not to risk a general breakdown in India or the interference with military operations which the Commander-in-Chief in India and the Supreme Commander, South-East Asia Command, feared might follow from a shortage of food. The War Cabinet would incur a grave responsibility if this took place in face of the reiterated warnings of the Viceroy. As for the suggestion that a quantity of rice should be found from India for Ceylon, against which 150,000 tons of wheat at present earmarked for Ceylon should be diverted to India, the Viceroy's hands would be immensely strengthened in considering this proposal if His Majesty's Government could first meet him on his main demand for wheat.

A general discussion followed. Attention was drawn to the serious underestimate by the Government of India of the rice crop for this year and to the faulty basis of their statistical case. It was argued, on the other hand, that the statistical issue had ceased to be of importance, and that the considerations in issue were now essentially psychological.

Reference was made by MR. BRUCE and MR. NASH to the importance of ensuring the import of phosphates to Australia and New Zealand, on the basis

[1] No. 393. [2] No. 391. [3] No. 432.

previously discussed. The question was raised whether the twenty-five additional ships which were to bring wheat to India from the Southern Dominions could carry phosphates on the outward voyage.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that this would not be possible without serious dislocation; but he was fully alive to the importance of the point raised by Mr. Bruce and Mr. Nash.

The War Cabinet agreed as follows:—

(1) The allocation of shipping for military maintenance programmes should be reduced by twenty-five ships during the period April to June. The Minister of War Transport was invited to use the capacity so released for loading 200,000 tons of wheat to India in the second and third quarters of 1944. This was on the understanding that the twenty-five ships to be made available by the Army would be additional to the ships already transferred to other operational uses, and that the Defence authorities would not ask for this capacity to be made good later this year.

(2) It should be made clear to the Viceroy that, having regard to stringency of the shipping situation, there was no prospect of wheat additional to the 200,000 tons becoming available in the remaining quarters of 1944.

(3) The Viceroy should be strongly pressed to agree to an exchange of rice for wheat with Ceylon, whereby a further 150,000 tons of wheat could be shipped to India.

(4) The effect of the above measures, and of the 50,000 tons already arranged for, would be to provide India with a total of approximately 400,000 tons of wheat. The War Cabinet felt that an announcement of so substantial an import of wheat should enable the Viceroy to handle the situation.

(5) It would not be desirable to approach the United States military authorities for assistance and that should be made clear to the Viceroy.

(6) For the technical reasons which had been explained by the Minister of War Transport, the proposal to ship small quantities of wheat to India in deadweight or in stowage should not be pursued.

435

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 260

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *22 March 1944, 3.15 am*
MOST SECRET

6904. Food Imports. My telegram 5927[1] of 10th March paragraph 1. Food Imports. H.M.G. have further considered your request for continued import of wheat in the light of report from Chiefs of Staff Committee.

2. H.M.G. have agreed that shipping capacity released during period April to June by reduction of military maintenance[2] programmes should be used to load 200,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India in second and third quarters of 1944. This replaces arrangement suggested in paragraph 11 of your telegram No. 459–S[3] of 4th March.

3. In view of heavy shipping commitments in second half of 1944 they wish it to be clearly understood that there is no prospect of any further net imports of cereals additional to the 50,000 tons already arranged for and the 200,000 tons referred to above being made available for India during remainder of 1944. They are however willing to ship to India 150,000 tons of wheat on the conditions of exchange for a similar quantity of rice provided by India to Ceylon as in my 5927 and strongly urge you to agree to this exchange.

4. Acceptance of proposal in paragraph 3 would provide for a total import of approximately 400,000 tons of wheat during remainder of 1944 and H.M.G. feel that announcement of so substantial an import of wheat should enable you to handle the situation.

5. As regards proposal in paragraph 12 of your telegram 459–S, H.M.G. consider approach to United States military authorities for shipping assistance is undesirable and desire that no further action should be taken regarding it.

6. On further examination Minister of War Transport states that there are technical difficulties which preclude shipments of small quantities of bagged wheat with other cargo from North America and this proposal therefore cannot be pursued.

[1] See No. 422, note 1. Para. 1 stated that No. 408 had 'been considered by Cabinet Committee and proposition in the last three paragraphs is being considered in relation to operational requirements'.
[2] L/PO/10/25 has 'decree'. [3] No. 408.

436

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: ff 254–7

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *22 March 1944, 6 pm*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

274. My telegram 6904[1] dated 21st March. Foodgrains. I am afraid the Cabinet's decision will have been a disappointment to you. But it was not given without the fullest consideration of the Indian case or the most explicit warning on my part as well as on yours of the dangers involved. So it only remains to make the best both in fact and in propaganda of such wheat imports as have been sanctioned, namely the 250,000 tons net import now on way or due over the next six months plus the further amount made available if you can see your way to releasing a corresponding amount of rice as and when the procurement situation makes that possible. I fully realise your difficulties over this and have emphasised them here. But is it really impossible for you to reckon this exchange wheat for your immediate purpose of fixing the wheat price? Without publishing actual figures it should surely be possible to announce that substantial wheat imports will be coming in throughout the year whether or not you think it expedient to reveal at once that some part of it would be in return for the release to Ceylon of a small fraction of the bumper rice crop as procured.

2. The figure of 150,000 tons for this exchange wheat was the one mentioned in the Cabinet but would of course (see my 5927[2]) only cover six months of exchange and would therefore be effective for 1944 even if you did not see your way to beginning the exchange till the end of June. The total would of course be larger if you could begin earlier and the exchange could continue next year if the *Aman* crop then justified it.

3. The Colonial Office lay great stress upon the necessity of having a small stock of rice to cover the eventuality of Ceylon being forced back upon wheat again if India would not continue to supply rice. I can see your difficulty about sending even two or three cargoes ahead of any wheat arriving. But would any real attention be excited if after two or three cargoes of wheat had been landed in India and the ships reloaded with rice a couple of cargoes extra of rice went to Ceylon, or if it were possible for the short voyage from India down to Ceylon to load a little more rice on the earlier ships than the wheat brought in? In any case there is no question of Ceylon asking for more rice than wheat exchanged over the whole period. You can therefore always give a public assurance that no rice will go out in excess of the wheat brought in.

4. I should explain that the shipping for the 200,000 tons has not been found from military import programme for India only but from reductions in several programmes including that for India due to shortfall in the amount of supplies available for loading in the second and third quarter of 1944. This explains statement that this amount replaces proposal for 10% cut in Indian programme which produced only 120,000 tons. You may care to explain this to Mountbatten and Auchinleck privately.

[1] No. 435; the date should be 22 March. [2] See No. 422, note 1.

437

Sir H. Lewis (Orissa) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/234: f 180

Report No. 6 GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CUTTACK, *23 March 1944*
D.O. No. 252 G.O.

9. I am not surprised at your finding nothing constructive in Jinnah's Aligarh speech.[1] Helpful suggestions have not been his strong suit. I remember at a time when the communal controversy was particularly acute at the first Round Table Conference Jinnah sought an interview with Ramsay Macdonald and, having obtained it, proceeded to pile on the agony and emphasize all the many obstacles and difficulties. Finally, more in self defence than anything else, the Prime Minister asked Jinnah what he thought had best be done about it. Jinnah replied "that is your problem not mine". The Prime Minister told us this at the time at one of those No. 10 Downing Street meetings at which these and other Conference matters were discussed. Jinnah has certainly hitherto resisted all attempts to elicit from him any better information as regards the administrative details of Pakistan, but that cannot be kept up indefinitely and for the reason you mention restlessness on those aspects may later begin to shew itself among members of his own party.

[1] In a speech at Aligarh University on 9 March, Mr Jinnah commented on Lord Wavell's Address to the Legislature (see No. 399, note 1). He criticised the Address as throwing 'a bait to the Congress' and Mr Gandhi to secure their good behaviour during the war period. Lord Wavell had disregarded the demands of Muslim India and had taken undue advantage of the Muslim League policy of non-embarrassment of Government. But Lord Wavell's policy could 'lead India nowhere'. The quickest road to victory lay not through conciliation but through the immediate grant of Pakistan.

438

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *23 March 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 9th March.[1] The air-mail bags seem to be moving a good deal faster now, and Peirse tells me he hopes the improvement will be maintained.

2. The fighting on our Eastern Frontier, which has so far caused comparatively little excitement and anxiety in India, is now likely to receive much closer attention from the press and the public. The good news from Arakan and the Hukawng Valley, and the stories about air-borne landings (which were rather overdone by some of the journalists), have been neutralized to some extent by the Japanese advance on the Chindwin. Confidence is not so far shaken, but people find difficulty in following the official communiqués, and Mountbatten and I have agreed to a statement to be made by Auchinleck in the Upper House almost immediately. Auchinleck's object is to put the operations into better perspective, and judging from newspaper comment, something of this kind is needed. The statement will no doubt be published some days before you receive this letter. It was actually made yesterday.[2]

Auchinleck mentioned to me the other day that it seemed peculiar to employ African troops on our Eastern Frontier while Indian troops were employed in Italy. I hold no very strong views about this at present, but it may at some time become a political issue, and I am not sure that there is any very convincing answer.

3. I need not comment on your remarks about the food situation. You know my views, and I forwarded to you a copy of Casey's long letter[3] about the situation in Bengal. There are no new developments of any importance, and I am awaiting a further telegram from you. Casey has come up to the Home Department with a further official demand for additional staff, and expects me to get trained men for him from the other Provinces. As you know, we have already found him forty men from the civil cadres, and I do not think we can possibly do more than this. The Provinces other than Bengal are themselves very hard up for staff, and Bengal will have to rely on the Army Officers we are already trying to find.

The Food Department have just informed me that in the absence of imports they will be unable to find more than 240,000 tons of wheat for the Defence Services in 1944–45 out of the 740,000 they require. This means that they will continue to supply the Defence Services up to the end of July, and that from

August onwards the wheat must come from elsewhere. I have not yet decided what to do about this; the departmental discussions are not complete, and I must have the Chief's views before moving further. Srivastava would like to send a deputation to London consisting probably of Hutchings, Gregory and a senior Army Officer. I will telegraph as soon as the position is clearer. But it is quite clear that we must have substantial imports; and the longer the War Cabinet delay the more difficult will they make the position for everyone.

4. Food is one of the main elements in the problem of inflation, on which the Finance Member has just produced a new memorandum.[4] The main points taken in this memorandum are that our planning for 1944 and 1945 assumed the acceptance by His Majesty's Government of certain proposals (made by a G.H.Q. committee presided over by Major-General Loch) for the reduction, adjustment or diversion of military demands; that His Majesty's Government has entirely disregarded our representations on these assumptions; and that in consequence, while there will be no substantial deterioration in 1944, there will be a deterioration of from Rs. 60 to Rs. 100 crores in 1945. On this basis, Raisman recommends, among other things, that we refuse to accept fresh C.P.O. demands for 1944, and all C.P.O. demands for 1945. The memorandum was considered by my War Board on 21 March, and was generally approved. My colleagues were all agreed that we must make the maximum possible war effort, but felt that we should fail to do so if we disregarded the inflationary threat, and our difficulties about food, coal and transportation. I said that before agreeing to a telegram about the refusal of C.P.O. demands, I must have a rather more detailed statement of the effect of the proposal. I was told during the meeting that India would continue to supply both the Army in India and the South-East Asia Command to the best of her ability, but would cease to supply overseas demands such as for Middle East and North Africa. You will probably receive a telegram on the subject before this letter reaches you. I enclose in this bag a copy of the memorandum—of the remedies suggested in paragraph 23, several concern His Majesty's Government, but the one I have referred to is the most important.

5. There is little improvement in the coal situation. Raisings have increased, and wagons are once more the main difficulty. Young, who seems to me to be a capable and energetic man, has not hit it off very well with the War Transport and Labour Departments, and has not for the time being been given the position I think he should hold in the Coal Control Scheme which is being brought into effect from 1st April. The general idea of the scheme is to control both prices and distribution, and at the same time to stimulate production.

[1] No. 419. [2] *The Council of State Debates*, vol. 1, 1944, 22 March 1944, pp. 487–8.
[3] See No. 430, note 7.
[4] A copy of Sir J. Raisman's *Third Memorandum on Inflation* is on L/F/File 6101 of 1944.

The co-operation of the industry has been secured, but there are three Mining Associations—one mainly British and two wholly Indian—which have in the past not worked very well together. There is to be an Advisory Board representing the three Mining Associations and other interests, and including Young and some of his official colleagues. Eventually, Young will be responsible for the administration of the control, but, to start with, he will not be able to take on much detailed work as he is still short of staff and is touring a great deal. I have agreed to the delegation of powers under the Control Order to officers who will later come directly under Young.

6. I have had a copy of the Inglis-Appleton Report on the Railways.[5] The report is not unkind, but shows that a good deal could be done to improve efficiency, and that the main weakness is lack of initiative and energy among the subordinate personnel. Benthall tells me that the report has been considered by a conference of General Managers, and that action is being taken on it, as also on more detailed recommendations made by Inglis and Appleton in a diary of their tour. The War Transport Department have telegraphed a summary of the Railways' additional needs in locomotives and rolling stock. The shortages are very great, and I do not know whether they can be met. If they cannot be met, it seems that drastic cuts in the demands for transport will be inevitable.

To the consternation of Benthall and of Wilson himself, I refused the extension recommended for the head of the Railway Board, and only sanctioned a six months extension to enable us to find a successor. I am sure we require new blood here. I telegraphed[6] to ask whether you had any outside names to suggest but have had no answer yet.

Cooper of Burmah-Shell, who is just back from a visit to the United Kingdom, tells me that extensive preparations for the reception and storage of aviation and motor-spirit in India will have to be made almost immediately. He thought the Departments in London much too ready to take the view that India must wait for all her needs until the end of the European war. He seems to have made his point that the preparation of port and storage accommodation will take a good many months. The whole of this problem is now being discussed in G.H.Q.

7. I see that the Attachment Bill has received the Royal Assent,[7] so we have extricated ourselves from that difficulty. I do not think there will be any further trouble.

8. In my last letter[8] I said I would try to have a talk with Firoz Khan Noon and His Highness of Kashmir about the line they should take on high policy matters at the meetings they will attend in London. I shall be unable to advise Kashmir as he did not find it possible to come to stay with me here before leaving for the U.K. He had a good many things to settle in Kashmir, and I did not press my invitation.

9. Post-war reconstruction is making rather slow progress. The authors of the Rs. 10,000 crore plan[9] attempted to state their aims in general terms with reference to a minimum standard of living and the national income required to support it. Their figures are not convincing, and statistics bearing on standards of living and national income in India are, I believe, notoriously unreliable. We are following an entirely different method, and have made no attempt to express our aims in terms of food, clothes and housing. Departments have been told to prepare plans for the main subjects on the assumption that finance will have to be dealt with later; and when the departmental plans are ready, they will have to be collected and fitted together on a realistic basis. So far we have Sargent's plan[10] for education; the Chief Engineers' Report on Road Development; a small and not very inspiring paper on civil air transport; and I believe, though I have not yet seen it, the draft of a plan on electric power. The Departments have been slow in appointing their Development Officers, and little or nothing has yet been done about agriculture and connected matters. In the meantime the Rs. 10,000 crore plan has been followed by a Rs. 15,000 crore plan by M. N. Roy,[11] of which I have seen a summary. Public interest is all to the good, but we must not get left too far behind. A report on the progress so far made has been written, but it is a dull document[12] and will probably not be much read outside the Departments. I have told Hutton, who is Secretary to the Reconstruction Committee of Council, to try and produce a more popular and readable summary. Srivastava thinks that a discussion between him and some of his colleagues, and the authors of the Rs. 10,000 crore plan might be interesting. He is anxious to forestall misunderstandings about our methods and intentions, and believes that he might get some useful ideas from people like Matthai who have given a good deal of thought to reconstruction problems. I have told him to consult Raisman, Mudaliar and Azizul Haque, and let me know what they think. I am quite convinced that we need a whole-time Member of Council for Planning and Development, and hope to hear shortly that you agree.

10. I have received Hill's "Notes and Suggestions"[13] on his tour, and I am told he sent you a copy by one of last week's bags. I hope to see Hill before he leaves. His tour has been very useful, and the "Notes and Suggestions" will enable us to consider some of his ideas before we receive the more formal

5 A copy of R. J. M. Inglis and Col. J. A. Appleton, *Report on the Railways in India* is on L/E/8/2601.
6 Not printed. 7 See No. 431, note 1. 8 No. 430, para. 4. 9 See No. 344, note 4.
10 See No. 198, note 4.
11 A copy of the *People's Plan for Economic Development of India* by B. N. Banerjee, G. D. Parikh, and V. M. Tarkunde, released by M. N. Roy (A. K. Mukerjee, Delhi, 1944) is on L/E/8/2663.
12 A copy of the Reconstruction Committee of Council's *First Report on the Progress of Reconstruction Planning, 1st March 1944*, WRC. 1/1000 (Government of India Press, New Delhi, 1944), is on L/E/8/4468.
13 A copy of Professor Hill's 'Notes and Suggestions' is on L/E/8/2612.

report he is to send from the U.K. He has made three main proposals—that we should establish a first class Medical Centre at Delhi to train teachers and research workers; that a Scientific Adviser of high quality should be provided with adequate staff to work for the Commander-in-Chief in G.H.Q., and that research, as in the U.K., should be centralized under a Member of Council free from ordinary departmental responsibility. The first two proposals are clearly desirable in themselves, though what the expert view on the Medical Centre will be I do not know. The third proposal, which fits in quite well with my ideas about a separate Member for Planning and Development, is much more controversial, and the Departments which now control their own research workers are, I understand, reacting unfavourably to it. I am glad the visit of our scientists to the U.K. has been so satisfactorily arranged, and I am sure it will do good.

11. The question of control over Indian High Commissioners in the Dominions and relations with Dominions' High Commissioners here seems at last to have been settled. I am glad you accepted my view that the Indians Overseas Department should be responsible,[14] and I quite agree that the name of this Department should be changed to the "Department of Commonwealth Relations". So far it has been preoccupied mainly with the grievances of Indians in the Dominions, but in future it will have to take a much wider view. Khare agrees, and I shall probably announce the change of name within a few days.

12. I have had a long personal letter from Mr. Gandhi,[15] of which I sent you a copy by the bag of 16th March. I intend to reply to this in my own words, and, if Maxwell and I agree on the substance of the reply, do not propose to trouble you with it before I send it off.

13. My colleagues are having a rough passage in the Assembly, and have lost several divisions. They do not seem unduly perturbed, though the attacks are concentrated mainly on the Indian Members—Maxwell, Raisman and Benthall are treated with much more courtesy. The defeats are due to a curious alliance between the Muslim League and the Congress, who are of course still at odds on all important political and constitutional matters. I have an idea that Jinnah wishes to show the power of the Muslim League to make government difficult as a retort to my reference[16] to the geographical unity of India, which annoyed him. I am told that some Members who ought to have voted with the Government have been absent for various reasons. But even with all safe votes, we cannot at the moment be certain of a majority and it seems likely that the Finance Bill will have to be certified.[17]

14. I have begun to work on the political appreciation I mentioned in a recent letter,[18] but have not made much progress with it. It is very difficult to produce any original ideas or to avoid a negative conclusion.

15. I have not yet heard whether Shanmukham Chetty is prepared to go to Australia as High Commissioner.

I am still awaiting a reply to my telegram No. 340–S[19] of 17th February, about the possible appointment of Shafa'at Ahmad Khan as one of your Advisers.

16. Sargent has now sent me his comments on the Colonial Office Report on Mass Education, a copy of which you sent to me with your letter of the 12th January.[20] He tells me that apart from the suggestion that an Adult Literacy Campaign should be linked up with some particular drive for social uplift in the wider sense, the Report does not shed new light on our problems in India. It covers much of the ground which has already been explored here in connection with Adult Education and Adult Literary problems. Sargent is, as you know, going home shortly, and proposes to discuss the report with the Members of the Committee responsible for it. He will obtain copies for Provincial and State educational authorities here.

17. I am going on tour to Bihar and Bengal on the 29th March, returning on the 9th April. I intend to visit Patna and the neighbourhood, Gaya, Dhanbad, Chittagong, Calcutta and two Bengal districts. I paid a short visit to Sind last week and found all going quite well. Dow uses his personal authority without hesitation to keep his Ministers, who are a very mixed lot (to put it kindly), on the rails.

Finance Member told me yesterday evening that in view of the slow progress of the discussion on the Budget I must postpone my tour to April 1st as I may have to certify the Budget and we shall not know its fate much earlier.

[14] Mr Amery had agreed to the Indians Overseas Dept. being responsible for relations with the Australian High Commissioner in tel. 263 of 17 March to Lord Wavell. L/P&J/8/190.
[15] No. 417. [16] In his Address to the Legislature (see No. 399, note 1).
[17] Government of India Act, Ninth Schedule, sec. 67B. [18] No. 414, para. 2.
[19] Not printed. [20] No. 325, para. 10.

439

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *24 March 1944*
Received: 5 April

I have had no answer from you yet to my telegrams[1] telling you of the Cabinet's decision[2] on wheat imports, but I fear it must have been a serious disappointment to you. The Chiefs of Staff, to whom the Cabinet Committee referred

[1] Nos. 435 and 436. [2] No. 434.

the question, did produce quite a helpful report[3] and it is only due to their report that the Cabinet agreed to the 200,000 tons over the next two quarters. They added a recommendation that a further 230,000 tons should either be secured from the Americans, or be somehow found in the category of military requirements later in the year. But Leathers has had such difficulties with the Americans over shipping already that he feels he simply cannot approach them for more and from the point of view of his own operational shortages he flatly refused to commit himself for anything beyond the 200,000 tons, and in that was supported by the Cabinet. I am afraid nothing will convince the Cabinet that with a 4 million tons surplus of rice crop it should be impossible for you to procure at any rate a substantial part of it and be able to use an even smaller part of it to get the Ceylon wheat in exchange. I certainly did not fail, again and again, to impress on the Cabinet that crop reaped and grain procured are in Indian conditions two quite different things and that a firm prospect of grain imports would make all the difference to procurement. They could not see why the Ceylon wheat should not be included in your calculations for the wheat price or in the general terms of your public pronouncements, and I hope that somehow or other you may be able to make use of the Ceylon wheat in your calculations, as I suggested in my private telegram. Anyhow, I warned them very earnestly of the responsibility they were taking and saw to it that my warning and yours were included in the Minutes.

* * *

3. You asked in one of your recent letters[4] what was the best account I could recommend of the results of the policy of "Quit Britain" fifteen hundred years ago. I have reinforced my own rather dim recollections of past reading by consulting Moore, the Head Master of Harrow, who is an expert on that particular subject, and he confirms my recollections that much the best account is given by volume one of the Oxford History of England, entitled *Roman Britain and the English Settlements*, by R. G. Collingwood and J. L. [J. N. L.] Myres.[5] I should think that the Oxford History would be available at Delhi University. Certainly Gwyer has been busy improving his own Library and should have secured it for his own purposes. But if you have not got it I will try and lay hold of it for you. Another book which Moore recommends, but which I have not read myself, is *The Transition from Roman Britain to Christian England*, by [G.] Sheldon (Macmillan, 1932).

* * *

7. You were not far off losing your Secretary of State last week, for a real good super bomb fell into Eaton Square garden, within 50 yards of our windows. Happily, it fell in the middle of the grass plot, dug a lovely great crater and blew upwards, covering the square with earth, but not even shattering our windows. Last night we had another short alert and I took your

"Flowers"[6] downstairs and read Ralph Hodgson's "Song of Honour", which I had not come across before and which contained some really good lines; also another old favourite, Diego Valdez.

8. I am glad that you are meditating the appointment of a special Member of the Council for Development. But he will only be of use to you if he is a first-rate man with some gift of imagination as well as practical ability, and not least, able to carry the Council over the heads of departmental colleagues when the latter are sticky. In this country I have seen Ministers appointed to that sort of general position without departments of their own completely paralysed by the quiet, firm obstruction of other departments, including not least the Treasury. I don't know indeed whether Woolton, who did so well as Food dictator, is going to get very far with reconstruction here now. Anyhow, he has the advantage of being in the War Cabinet while most of those whom he is reconstructing are outside.

9. As regards individuals, I am suggesting in my telegram[7] that you might think of Mirza Ismail. Linlithgow was always chary of using him, not feeling sure that he could be trusted. My impression of the man, without knowing him personally, is that he has got the imagination and drive, as well as the sense of publicity, and not least the practical experience of a similar task on a smaller scale in Mysore. It may well be that with a really big task to fire his ambition and show that he can do better in practice than Birla & Co., he may run straight and forgo his tendency to try and play up to Congress. Much would depend on the extent to which you could personally inspire him with the opportunities of his task and make him feel that his prospects of success depended on your sympathy and support with the Council.

10. In connection with reconstruction, there is a suggestion which Coupland has put to me which might be worth considering. You will remember the four regions into which he suggested[8] India might be divided for political purposes so as to half meet and half dodge the issue of Pakistan. Well: whether there is anything in that politically or not, these regions of his are very natural regions from the point of view of economic and more particularly electricity and irrigation development. What he suggested was that regional reconstruction commissioners or commissions might be set up for these regions which might be really valuable in getting reconstruction planned and carried out and might incidentally make these regions familiar entities in the minds of the Indian public in case later on they offered a way out of the constitutional deadlock.

11. Talking about the British Council and British cultural influence in India, a friend of mine the other day told me that the collection of British pictures

[3] No. 432. [4] No. 381, para. 14. [5] Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1936.
[6] See No. 399, note 2. [7] 7133 of 26 March. L/E/8/4490. [8] See No. 103, note 2.

in the Victoria Memorial at Calcutta was anything but calculated to inspire India, so far as the general arrangement and set out of the pictures is concerned. I rather think he also thought the pictures themselves not the very best that could be shown to India as typical of British art.

440

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *25 March 1944, 11.55 pm*
SECRET *Received: 25 March, 11.45 pm*

No. 628–S. Your telegram No. 6904[1] of 22nd March. Food imports. Imports of 200,000 tons wheat in second and third quarters of 1944 in addition to 50,000 tons already arranged will ease immediate difficulties. But I wish to make it quite clear to His Majesty's Government that they have not solved Indian food problem or secured India as a military base during 1944 by imports of this size which are one-sixth of India's real requirements and one-half of minimum which I postulated as essential for next six months.

2. See paragraphs 4 to 9 of my No. 459–S[2] of 4th March. On latest wheat forecast and offers from Provinces I am prepared to put procurement at 900. Taking civil requirements for deficit areas at rock bottom figure of 550 balance available for Defence Services is 350. But demands of Defence Services are 724 leaving deficit of nearly 400 with no (repeat no) provision for reserve. Import of 200 only covers about one half of the deficit. Import of 50 promises [promised] by end April has already been allotted and is excluded from calculation.

3. Announcement of import of 200 will thus have no real effect on procurement or prices. Nor can we raise figure to 400 on understanding that we will export rice to Ceylon in exchange of [for] additional 150. It will be quite impossible to consider any export of rice for some time in fact until popular confidence is entirely restored. Althouth the rice crop is good the normal carry-over has vanished and will undoubtedly be replaced by the retention in the cultivators' hands of proportion of crop equivalent to or greater than normal carry-over which may amount to 4·5 million tons in Bengal, Bihar, Orissa and Assam. Until it is seen how Bengal procurement scheme goes (and as I have informed[3] you it is going badly at present) any attempt to export rice would fail and would have disastrous effects in driving all rice underground. There is crisis in rice supply and prices in Bihar at present due to lack of confidence in Bengal procurement scheme and belief that famine conditions will recur in Bengal.

4. My conclusion is that we need at least 200 additional wheat in 1944 for bare needs of civil population and Defence Services and that no (repeat no) part of this can be balanced by exports. This will still leave us without any reserve to meet contingencies or to control prices.

5. Before receipt of your telegram I was about to inform Supreme Commander and Commander-in-Chief that of the 724 required for the services in 1944 I could supply only 350. I will now inform them that 550 can be supplied. I must also inform them that in view of the failure of His Majesty's Government to supply imports I have the gravest apprehension of the economic situation in India this autumn and of its stability as a base. I must leave it to the Supreme Commander to what extent he informs the Americans of this position but it obviously concerns their troops vitally.[4]

6. Sir A. Rowlands is flying home shortly and I am giving him details of the position. Frankly I am unable to understand His Majesty's Government's failure to approach the Americans for assistance in shipping since they are unable to supply it themselves. India is a combined base for allied effort against Japan, and failure to maintain stability will affect Allied war effort. Unless His Majesty's Government regard my opinion expressed in a number of telegrams as worthless I feel it is incumbent on them to inform Combined Chiefs of Staff of my views direct rather than leave information to come to Washington indirectly as I expect it is bound to be [do] as the result of the warning I must deliver to Supreme Commander.[5]

[1] No. 435. [2] No. 408. [3] No. 426.

[4] In tel. 7332 Guard of 27 March Mr Amery assumed that if Lord Wavell spoke to Admiral Mountbatten and General Auchinleck as proposed in this para. he would make it clear that, as stated in para. 5 of No. 435, H.M.G. 'consider approach to U.S. military authorities for shipping assistance undesirable'. In tel. SAC 1435 of 2 April Admiral Mountbatten apprised the Chiefs of Staff that Lord Wavell had shown him tel. 628–S and had informed him in the sense of its para. 5. L/E/8/3323: f 242, L/WS/1/654: f 221.

[5] In reply to Mr Dibdin's tel. 7340 of 27 March Mr Hutchings explained in tel. 3640 of 30 March that figures relating to wheat in this tel. and No. 408 referred to 12 months beginning 1 May 1944. L/E/8/3323.

441

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/32: f 29

PRIVATE *25 March 1944, 10.55 pm*

SECRET

3–U. Your telegram of 22nd instant, No. 274.[1] See my telegram 628–S of to-day. It is little I can add. When I accepted this most thankless and arduous

[1] No. 436.

post I expected confidence and support from Prime Minister and War Cabinet. I do not feel I am receiving it in this matter which I consider is vital to India. If War Cabinet place any reliance on my judgment I do not see how they can refuse necessary imports without even reference to America for assistance in shipping. I hope that War Cabinet do not consider that I am exaggerating or falsifying the situation which would obviously be an impossible position for both parties.

442

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/109b: ff 36–7

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *26 March 1944, 4 am*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

284. Prime Ministers' Conference. C.O.S. have been requested to prepare (in addition to papers on current or immediately impending defence questions such as those arising from conduct of war against Japan, policing of Europe, release of men from the Forces) paper on connected questions of (*a*) military aspect of post-war settlement and (*b*) co-ordination of defence policy within British Commonwealth after the war. Of these the former includes international security in military sense, international police forces, common use of bases, establishment of security regions or zones: the latter includes machinery for formulation with Dominions of Imperial defence policy, co-ordination of action, training equipment and organisation of Commonwealth's forces and development of industrial potential.

2. I understand that C.-in-C. has been working on similar questions or some of them from Indian aspect and I think it very desirable that I should be furnished by you in time for study before conference begins with statement however tentative of views you have formed on these problems in relation to India's place in treatment of them. This is *not* a matter on which I s[houl]d expect you to brief Noon and Kashmir.

3. In this connection it may be useful to you to know that idea has been thrown up here and is under consideration that Empire defence should be organised on regional lines, Australia and New Zealand forming the group for the Pacific area in close co-ordination with Dutch, India would be centre of area including Persian Gulf and Burma, South Africa would be nucleus of area stretching up to Kenya, and Canada the bridgehead with America for Pacific and Atlantic defence. Britain would accept responsibility for the defence of Commonwealth in relation to Europe. Linked with this conception is the

idea that much greater space is necessary for training of modern armies and air forces than is available here and that system might be developed whereby this country maintained considerable body of troops in the various regional areas as training in mechanical and air warfare can much better be given in Africa, Australia and Canada. This arrangement might be a great stimulus to Empire solidarity and emigration to the Dominions, and cost might be borne by exchange of goods within the Empire. If anything develops out of this idea it will be relevant to the problem of defence in India under any self-governing constitution, as presence of United Kingdom forces would not be special to India but a normal feature of Commonwealth relationship.

Above is an entirely tentative idea but will no doubt be discussed at forthcoming conversations.[1]

[1] Lord Wavell replied to this tel. in his tel. 695–S of 1 April. He stated that a confidential paper would be sent to Mr Amery in mid-April which contained 'purely military assessment of forces required for the tasks likely to face India after the war. It neither takes account of constitutional changes nor (? attempt)s forecast of India's position in the post war scheme of imperial defence.' He added that General Auchinleck was anxious that the India Office should not put out any material about post-war defence which had not been fully approved by the C.-in-C. In a note, Sir D. Monteath agreed no action was needed on Lord Wavell's reply. 'Nor does this take us v. much further.' L/PO/6/109b. The confidential paper referred to by Lord Wavell does not appear to have been received in the India Office.

443

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/193: f 172

GOVERNOR'S CAMP, CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR, *26 March 1944*

SECRET

No. R. 8. G.C.P.

4. I was very pleased to have a chat with my old chief, Nazimuddin, and I took the opportunity of asking him to elucidate Muslim League policy on the subject of Pakistan. I asked him whether Pakistan necessarily excluded the idea of some form of union with Hindustan. He replied in the negative but added that he did not wish to be misunderstood and referred me to Jinnah's interview given to the representative of the *News Chronicle*.[1] In short, I gathered that the

[1] In this interview, dated New Delhi 29 February, Mr. Jinnah stated that if the British Government was sincere in its desire for peace in India it should immediately frame a new constitution dividing India into two sovereign nations—Pakistan and Hindustan. When the interviewer suggested that such a division would surely weaken India and lay her open to future aggression, Mr Jinnah replied: 'I don't agree that India would be any safer under a forced unity. In fact she might be more vulnerable because Hindus and Muslims will never be reconciled with each other. Any agreement between Muslims and Hindus to work together as a single unit or even in a federation is an impossibility.' L/P&J/8/513.

Moslem League is determined to have Pakistan but that would not necessarily exclude negotiations with Hindustan. It would, as Nazimuddin said, depend on circumstances. This confirms the view which I have all along held that the main object of Pakistan is to secure a base for negotiations on an absolutely equal footing. It seems to me certain that eventually economic and geographical factors will indicate that the balance of advantage lies with the union of Pakistan with Hindustan rather than in Central Asia. The union may amount only to an agreement as to a "minimal centre", as envisaged by Professor Coupland,[2] and it is obvious that many years may elapse before any such union is effected or before the Secretary of State can divest himself of responsibility for the administration of India. This is the view which I have taken in correspondence with Your Excellency regarding the future of the I.C.S. and the I.P. In my discussion with Nazimuddin I touched on the difficulty in respect of foreign policy and of the control of the army in a united India in view of the Moslem tendency towards Pan-Islamism and the tendency towards isolationism. It seemed obvious, however, that the Moslem League, of which Nazimuddin is a member of the Working Committee, refuses to look as far forward as that and is concerned for the present only with the establishment of Pakistan. After Pakistan has been secured, the Moslem League would then turn its attention to problems involved in the conception of a united India.

[2] See No. 103, note 2.

444

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/E/8/3323: f 243

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *27 March 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 12/44

Prime Minister

Foodgrains for India

1. I attach copies of the Viceroy's official reply[1] to the telegram[2] informing him of the recent War Cabinet decision, and of a private telegram[3] which accompanied it. The former has been circulated to the Cabinet.

2. I do not think the Viceroy's attitude to the proposed exchange of rice for wheat is unreasonable. One of the contributory causes of the Bengal famine was the destruction by cyclone over a wide area of the small stores normally held by cultivators. Elsewhere they have been eaten into. The peasants will certainly replace these stocks before they part with any rice in the markets. Procurement

depends on re-establishing confidence, and nothing would shake that more than the news that rice was being loaded for export.

3. As I made clear at the Cabinet I share Wavell's anxiety to the full. I do not see that he can avoid a substantial shortfall on the wheat requirements for the Defence Services. You will see that he is warning Mountbatten to that effect. I have asked him[4] to make it clear to Mountbatten that the Cabinet have decided against asking the U.S. military authorities for shipping assistance.

4. Even if a request to the Americans may stand but a small chance of success I feel myself that it should be made, if only to give us an effective answer to them if Wavell's fears are realized.

5. I suggest that the Indian Foodgrains Requirement Committee might meet when Sir A. Rowlands arrives here and hear his statement of the Viceroy's views orally. They could then advise the Cabinet whether anything further should be done to help the Viceroy. It would I think be useful if the Secretary of State for War could be present.

L. S. AMERY

[1] No. 440. [2] No. 435. [3] No. 441. [4] See No. 440, note 4.

445

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Gandhi[1]

L/P&J/8/623: ff 149–51

28 March 1944

Dear Mr. Gandhi,
I have your letter of March 9th.[2] You will receive a separate reply[3] from the Home Secretary on your complaint about Mr. Butler's answer to a question in the House of Commons. I can only say that I deeply regret if you are left with the impression that the Government of India have been unsympathetic in the matter of Mrs. Gandhi's illness. Miss Slade's case will be examined in the light of what you say about her.

I do not think it profitable that we should enter into lengthy argument, and do not propose to answer in detail the points you raise in your letter. But I think it best to give you a clear statement of my views on the future development of India and the reasons for your present detention.

[1] Lord Wavell's letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr. Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944) pp. 122–3 and in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Jhaveri and Tendulkar, Bombay, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 305–7.
[2] No. 417. [3] A copy of this reply is on L/P&J/8/622.

The draft declaration[4] of H.M.G. which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India stated in unmistakable terms the intention of H.M.G. to give India self-government under a constitution of her own devising, arrived at by agreement between the principal elements. I need hardly say that I am in entire accord with that aim, and only seek the best means to implement it without delivering India to confusion and turmoil. Much wisdom and a spirit of goodwill and compromise will be required to arrive at the right solution, but with good leadership I am sure a solution can be found.

Meanwhile there is much work to be done, particularly in the economic field, in preparing India to take her proper place in the modern world. She must be ready to welcome change and progress in many hitherto unfamiliar directions and to raise the standard of living of her population. Such work is primarily non-political: it may well hasten a political settlement, but cannot await it. It will give rise to many new and absorbing problems demanding the best abilities that India can bring to bear on them. India cannot be expected to tackle these problems in isolation from the rest of the world, or without the aid that Britain can give and the services of an experienced administration. But it is work in which leaders of all parties can co-operate with the certainty that they are helping the country towards the goal of freedom.

I regret that I must view the present policy of the Congress party as hindering and not forwarding Indian progress to self-government and development. During a war in which the success of the United Nations against the Axis powers is vital both to India and to the world, as you yourself have recognised, the Working Committee of Congress declined to co-operate, ordered Congress ministries to resign, and decided to take no part in the administration of the country or in the war effort which India was making to assist the United Nations. At the greatest crisis of all for India, at a time when Japanese invasion was possible, the Congress party decided to pass a resolution[5] calling on the British to leave India, which could not fail to have the most serious effect on our ability to defend the frontiers of India against the Japanese. I am quite clear that India's problems cannot be solved by an immediate and complete withdrawal of the British.

I do not accuse you or the Congress party of any wish deliberately to aid the Japanese. But you are much too intelligent a man, Mr. Gandhi, not to have realised that the effect of your resolution must be to hamper the prosecution of the war; and it is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India, and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage. I do not see how those responsible for the safety of India could have acted otherwise than they did and could have failed to arrest those who sponsored the resolution. As to general Congress responsibility for the disturbances which followed, I was, as you know, Commander-in-Chief at the time; my vital lines of communication to the Burma frontier

were cut by Congress supporters, in the name of the Congress, often using the Congress flag. I cannot therefore hold Congress guiltless of what occurred; and I cannot believe that you, with all your acumen and experience, can have been unaware of what was likely to follow from your policy. I do not believe that the Congress party's action in this matter represented the real feeling of India, nor that the Congress attitude of non-co-operation represents the opinion of anything like a majority of India.

To sum up, I believe that with general co-operation we can in the immediate future do much to solve India's economic problems, and can make steady and substantial progress towards Indian self-government.

I believe that the greatest contribution that the Congress party can make towards India's welfare is to abandon the policy of non-co-operation and to join whole-heartedly with the other Indian parties and with the British in helping India forward in economic and political progress—not by any dramatic or spectacular stroke but by hard steady work towards the end ahead. I think that the greatest service you could do to India would be to advise unequivocally such co-operation.

In the meantime I regard it as my task in the interests of India, of which I am a sincere friend, to concentrate all my efforts on bringing this war to a victorious conclusion, and to prepare for India's advancement after the war. In this task I feel I can count on very considerable co-operation from the majority of Indians.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

[4] Vol. I, No. 456. [5] Vol. II, No. 470.

446

Secretary of State to Government of India, Home Department

Telegram, L/P&J/8/618B: f 150

MOST SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *29 March 1944, 11 am*

7453. Your express letter of the 19th February,[1] unnumbered. Congress responsibility. I must record my appreciation of thoroughness and sense of balance of Wickenden's very useful report. Question of judicial proceedings must however be decided by political rather than legal considerations and I find myself wholly in agreement with your conclusions. I do not propose to consult Law Officers.

[1] No. 392.

447

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *29 March 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 16th March.[1] It was delivered on the 25th, so the improvement in the service is so far maintained.

2. Auchinleck's statement[2] in the Council of State on the operations on the Eastern Frontier was well received. There is of course an under-current of anxiety, and the Congress press will not hesitate to make capital of any delays or local setbacks that may occur. As far as I am able to judge, Mountbatten should be able to defeat the threat to Assam very handsomely. The use of aircraft both for supply purposes and for the movement of troops makes an enormous difference, and our air superiority is likely to be decisive. All the same, we cannot expect people in eastern Bengal and Assam not to listen to Japanese broadcasts, and civilian morale in those parts must for some time be in a delicate state. I understand that the troops are in very good heart, and I am glad to hear of the postal record scheme mentioned in paragraph 6 of your letter. Small amenities of this kind help a good deal.

3. I am sorry I have been so obstinate about the food problem, but I have no intention of letting go as I believe adequate imports to be vital not merely to the well-being of India, but to the war effort in the East. The Chiefs of Staff must realise, if your colleagues have any difficulty in doing so, the effect on operations of a really serious famine extending not only to Bengal, but to several Provinces. This is not a matter of sentiment—on the one hand, it is impossible to ignore the needs of starving people, and on the other, an acute shortage of food at once reduces the efficiency of the factories and the civilian services of all kinds, on which a Military Commander must rely. I am not going to send a separate reply to your letter[3] forwarding a copy of correspondence between Butler and Llewellin, though I think Llewellin's comments show how little our problem is understood at home. We have to consider not what we might be able to do if India were inhabited by a homogeneous and literate population convinced of the need for total war and determined to suppress black markets, hoarding and profiteering, and corruption generally, but the position as it is in an average district, e.g. of the Punjab or Bengal. We have also to remember that, although on paper the "Grow More Food" campaign deals with vast areas of land alleged to be cultivable, and although statistics such as those quoted by Llewellin are disappointing, the total produc-

tion of foodgrains in India in any given year depends almost entirely on the monsoon. A large proportion of the cultivated and cultivable area is, from the farmer's point of view, insecure. Irregular or deficient rainfall may falsify the best statistical plan the Agricultural Departments can produce. I am clear that we must avoid another famine at all costs, and that this can be done only if we have adequate imports. I do not think the extra 200,000 tons promised in your last official telegram[4] anything like adequate, and we must have more. I have already explained why the export of rice is out of the question.

The Bengal problem is still in the balance. *Aman* procurement seems to be going slightly better, but is still well behind schedule. Casey is hammering away at his staff problems, and is pressing me to release more civil officials. I fear that this cannot be done; the Provinces other than Bengal are all in difficulties, and Casey will have to rely on the men he can get from the Army. I have heard no more about Keith Murray, and I have just written to Casey asking whether he wants Elmhirst, about whom you telegraphed[5] to me a day or two ago. Apart from the army officers we hope to get him here, he has already got six coming from the Middle East, and hopes for another six. He is alive to the importance of an adequate supply of consumers' goods, but when Hydari was in Calcutta recently he found that the Ministers and officials were extremely vague about quantities. He had a talk with Casey, and I hope that more definite information will soon be given to him.

Mudie is having an anxious time in Bihar where the price of rice is still high and supplies are short. The Bihar Government have not been very co-operative, and in some ways they have probably been unwise. They have one controversy with my Food Department about the allocation of rice from Nepal, and another with the Bengal Government about the exchange of rice for supply to the coal mining districts. I need not bother you with all the details—I intend to go into them with Mudie at the end of this week.

4. I mentioned in paragraph 4 of my letter of 23rd March[6] that you would probably receive before very long a telegram saying that India is unable to accept fresh C.P.O. demands for 1944, and must be relieved of all C.P.O. demands for 1945. I have just passed the draft of this telegram,[7] which I shall follow up with a private message[8] to you. I think Raisman is right in his determination to call a halt—he says very reasonably that we keep on asking His Majesty's Government to relieve us of part of our economic burden, and at the same time acquiesce in fresh demands which, though not individually very important, have a considerable cumulative effect on inflation.

[1] No. 431. [2] See No. 438, note 2. [3] L/E/8/3302: f 139. [4] No. 435.
[5] Not printed. [6] No. 438.
[7] 2275 of 28 March from G. of I., War Dept. to S. of S. via War Office. L/WS/1/582.
[8] Tel. 660–S of 29 March. L/PO/10/18.

5. Rowlands, who left for the U.K. this morning, has been briefed to discuss both the food problem and inflation. I had a talk with him and gave him my views, and I hope someone besides yourself will listen to them.

6. The Indians Overseas Department is to be renamed the Department of Commonwealth Relations with effect from 30th March. A telegram[9] has been sent to you saying that the change will be announced on that date. Council made no comments, and I think agreed fully with me about the need for the change.

Mackay arrived here on the 2nd March. As you expected, he showed some anxiety about his status and about the Department with which he was to transact his general business. I have explained the position to him, and I think he is satisfied.

Shanmukham Chetty has not yet told Azizul Haque (who has so far been handling the matter) whether he accepts the Australian appointment. The delay is annoying. I rather doubt if this appointment and the similar appointment in Canada if it is ever created, will be very popular with Indians.

7. Khare has several problems on his hands. My efforts[10] to bring about a better understanding with the South African Government through Smuts have failed, and Khare insists on bringing the South African problem before Council again immediately. It will be discussed on the 31st March. It is impossible to say what line my colleagues will take. At Linlithgow's second Council meeting about South Africa, some of them began to see the difficulties of retaliation. But Linlithgow could at the time only secure a postponement of a decision while technical details were examined by the Commerce and Supply Departments,[11] and feeling runs so high that Council may insist on this occasion on something more than a diplomatic protest. I am certain that we must move Shafa'at Ahmad Khan, and will reply as soon as I can to the telegram[12] in which you say you are prepared to accept him as an Adviser with you, if necessary.

The Ceylon constitution is likely to give some trouble. Khare fears that the Colonial Office may lend themselves to a deep-laid plan against Indian interests in Ceylon, and I hope you will be able to consult me before any final decision is reached. In a recent telegram[13] you said you expected to hear something from the Colonial Office within a few days.

I have agreed to Khare accepting a resolution to be moved in the Council of State about the treatment of Indians in the East African territories. It is alleged that the Governments of Tanganyika, Uganda and Kenya have introduced immigration restrictions which are intended to keep Indians out, and apply not only to new Indian immigrants, but to people who had settled in East Africa and were evacuated or advised to leave by their respective Governments. An official protest will undoubtedly be sent to you about this, and I hope that it may be possible to do something definite. The treatment of Indians within the Empire is the one subject on which all Parties here are united.

[The first three sub-paras. of para. 8, on Mr G. L. Betham's future employment, a proposed visit by Sir B. J. Gould to Lhasa, and tribal affairs on the north-east frontier, omitted.]

In paragraph 11 of your letter you mentioned the possibility of legislation in the United States so as to permit a certain amount of Indian immigration. You will have seen that an unexpected Bill, which would, if passed, give us what we want, has been introduced by a representative named Celler. I gather from Press reports that another Bill has been, or will be, introduced by Claire Luce. These Bills may prove embarrassing as they are not in any way sponsored by the State Department. Meanwhile Bajpai reports that his suggestions to the editors of certain newspapers have borne fruit, and there have lately been some leading articles advocating concessions for Indians.

J. J. Singh has been active about the Japanese incursion into Manipur. Two press messages containing alarmist statements by him, in one of which he appealed to President Roosevelt to intervene, have been held up in censorship here.

9. Thank you for your telegram[14] about the creation of a new Membership of Council for Planning and Development. I quite agree with you that everything depends on getting the right man. It is not an appointment in which a Member of Council can be carried by his permanent officials, and a man who is unable to provide most of the ideas and a great deal of the drive himself would be no use at all. Ardeshir Dalal is a possible candidate, and I hope before long to have an opportunity of seeing him. Srivastava, as I told you last week, is anxious to have an informal discussion with the Bombay planners, and his colleagues have agreed. So Ardeshir Dalal will probably be coming to New Delhi before very long. Incidentally Gregory has produced a long paper on the Bombay plan exposing a good many fallacies in it and working up to the conclusion that it is not really a plan at all, but only a statement of aims supported by a number of arguments none of which will hold water.

10. Hill's "Notes and Suggestions",[15] of which you must by now have received your copy, are closely linked with post-war planning and development. I had my talk with Hill on 25th March. He told me that the appointment of a Scientific Adviser to the Commander-in-Chief had already been taken up departmentally, and I hear that the War Department will telegraph to you very shortly about it. If, as I understand, they want some junior men in addition to the Scientific Adviser, you may have some trouble in finding them. But Hill, who leaves next week, may be able to help. He is particularly keen on his project for a Medical Centre at Delhi. He did not develop at length with me the

[9] 639-S of 28 March. L/P&J/8/190: f 63. [10] See Enclosure to No. 238 and No. 370, para. 9.
[11] See No. 82, para. 5. [12] Not printed. [13] 276 of 22 March. L/P&J/8/198.
[14] See No. 439, note 7. [15] See No. 438, note 13.

proposal for the concentration of research under one Member of Council; but I agree that this would be a good plan if the right Member could be found.

11. On the subject of post-war planning and development, I do not think I have ever let you know the result of the examination here of the Report on Broadcasting in India which A. C. Cossor, Ltd., produced for me while I was at home. I have seen opinions by Bokhari, the Director-General, and Goyder, the Chief Engineer, of All-India Radio. Goyder says that we are already doing as much as we can for village broadcasting, and that his technical commitments for the South-East Asia Command are such that he could not for the time being take on any large new programme. Bokhari is about to submit a plan for the post-war development of All-India Radio. This does not get us much further, but Goyder is undoubtedly right, and we shall have to wait before trying to do anything big.

12. I agree with what you say in paragraph 4 of your letter about economic planning. Raisman will be able to discuss this during his visit, as well as our more pressing post-war problems. The trouble about economic planning is that the interests of different countries are really fundamentally opposed, and that during the war more or less fictitious efforts are made between allied countries to demonstrate that some compromise is possible. As soon as the war ends, they revert to the law of the jungle.

13. Internal politics have received a fillip from the rejection by the Assembly of the Finance Bill. The Congress Members of the Assembly have for some time been working on Bhulabhai Desai, who had formerly declined to attend. He finally agreed under pressure, and at a Party meeting consented to lead the Party and speak on the Finance Bill on 27th March, on condition that in future Members would obey his instructions about attendance. His speech[16] was less bitter than might have been expected, and was, I think, directed largely towards opinion in the U.K. and in America. To people who do not understand the relations between the Congress and the Muslim League, Bhulabhai's references to the American Revolution and the issue "No taxation without representation", to the unrepresentative character of my Executive Council, and to the immediate need for a National Government, must seem very reasonable. But the temporary alliance between the Congress and the Muslim League, which lost us the division by one vote, does not extend to any of the matters on which agreement would be needed before a National Government of any kind could be formed. The attendance of some of the Congress members at this session of the Legislature, and Bhulabhai's own appearance, are significant. I do not think they expected to achieve any substantial or constructive result; what they were after was the exact opposite, for in spite of Gandhi's attitude, there is a feeling among a good many educated people that the political game is now hardly worth playing, and that it would be a good plan to press

Government, as now constituted, to do much more than in the past on the economic side. I do not wish to exaggerate this tendency. Hill said he had observed it, but his acquaintances are mainly officials, scientific workers, and university professors. The Bombay plan is a more obvious instance of what I mean, and although the process has not gone very far, there is undoubtedly an increasing interest in economic development and the administrative measures necessary to achieve it. It was to scotch this partial return to the normal that the Congress Members, including Bhulabhai Desai, emerged from their retirement.

14. I enclose a copy of my reply[17] to Gandhi's personal letter.[18] This was accepted by Maxwell as a reasonable statement of the position and one not likely to embarrass His Majesty's Government. Gandhi will of course tear it to pieces at leisure, as he always does.

Jinnah has been making trouble in the Punjab, and though I do not think he will break up the Government immediately, Firoz Khan Noon and others believe that Khizar is fighting a losing battle and that in the end Jinnah will gain control. Jinnah timed his visit to Lahore to coincide with the Budget session of the Punjab Assembly, and at a meeting of the Muslim League members there he seems to have derided the Sikander–Jinnah Pact[19] and to have suggested that there was really no such thing as a Unionist Party. Members of the Muslim League could not be members of another Party, and both Sikander and Khizar belonged to the League along with their political adherents. There might of course be a coalition Government consisting of a Muslim League element and elements representing the minorities; but the Unionist Party was a misnomer. Khizar has not yet given any ground, and Jinnah failed to convince the whole of his audience. But disagreements among the Punjab Muslims are common, and I fear that in the long run the communal alignment may be substituted for the economic alignment in Punjab politics. This will be a disaster for the Punjab, and Jinnah will have a great deal to answer for.

For different reasons the Orissa and North-West Frontier Province Ministries are not very secure; but both have survived their budget sessions.

I enclose a copy of a most interesting letter[20] from Casey about Bengal politics.

15. You ask what happened at my interview with Bhopal during the meeting of the Standing Committee of the Chamber of Princes. The answer is "very little". Bhopal saw me on the 23rd and suggested submitting a draft to me about 1st August to be followed by a meeting with some of the Princes a fortnight or so later. I presume his "draft" would contain a list of points which

16 *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. II, 1944, 27 March 1944, pp. 1595–1604.
17 No. 445. 18 No. 417. 19 See No. 73, note 2.
20 A letter of 26 March 1944 from Mr Casey to Lord Wavell on the political situation in Bengal is on L/P&J/5/151.

the Princes would like to raise. This shows, I think, that the Princes are not as perturbed by the Attachment Scheme as some of them pretended. With the Chancellorship decided[21] the support to the attached units has weakened!

16. I recommended the Finance Bill to the Assembly on 28th March. They flung it out, and today I certified[22] and recommended it to the Council of State. I am off on tour to Bihar and Bengal on 1st April. As I had to change my Bihar programme, I shall visit Patna on the return, and not on the outward, journey. Outside Calcutta, and Patna, I hope to see Gaya and Dhanbad in Bihar and the Chittagong and Birbhum Districts in Bengal. I expect to be back in New Delhi on the 13th April.

[21] In tel. 646-P of 28 March, Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery of the unopposed election of the Nawab of Bhopal as Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes and the Jam Saheb's defeat of the Maharaja of Patiala for the office of Pro-Chancellor. L/P&S/13/996.

[22] See No. 438, note 17.

448

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *29 March 1944*
Received: 7 April

I am by no means sure that in your last telegram[1] about the food situation you have not struck the right line in letting Auchinleck and Mountbatten know that there is just so much that you can give them and no more. One of my difficulties in arguing the case before the War Cabinet has been the inevitable confusion between two different questions, namely, whether India can feed herself, or ought to be able to feed herself without imports, and secondly whether she can provide the additional food required for the large forces collecting in India over and above the normal requirements of India's own army. Once the two points are more clearly separated and the Government of India, speaking on its own responsibility, says that it can provide so much for military purposes and no more, then the onus of proof against it lies with the War Cabinet, while similarly the military are put in the position of appealing to the War Cabinet direct. Constitutionally, too, that is a much sounder position, as long at any rate as you are able somehow or other to meet India's normal requirements from her own resources.

2. Meanwhile, beyond circulating your official telegram to the Cabinet and letting the Prime Minister see your private one,[2] I am waiting to let the point sink in, as well as to await Auchinleck and Mountbatten's reactions. As

soon as Rowlands comes back I must call an emergency meeting of the Indian Foodgrains Committee and we can then see what effect Rowlands' presentation of the case may have upon them and so upon the Cabinet. I need not say how fully I share your disappointment and anxieties. But you must not suppose that the Cabinet are not alive to the difficulties of your position. The trouble is that they are so much more alive to the immediate operational requirements and to the extraordinary difficulty of getting things out of the Americans, who are so incredibly wasteful with their own supplies and so sticky when it comes to helping us. No doubt that is only human nature, but I can quite understand the reluctance both of Leathers and of the P.M. to put in yet another request when several other important requests have been turned down.

3. I have just been reading Hill's long informal report[3] on research in India and it seems to me to contain a lot of good matter and many suggestions well worth following up with the least possible delay. Research is so much the foundation of everything, and money spent on it, and spent early, is so paying in the end, that it seems to me well worth while going ahead boldly on that line, especially if some of the expenditure bears directly on the war.

4. I forget for the moment whether I ever told you about my talk with Malcolm Robertson and Gillan about the British Council.[4] They were well content to know about the visit of the Indian scientists here and are going to lay themselves out to be helpful to them in every way in the hope that the idea of a return invitation or the creation of something in the nature of an Indian Council might come from our Indian visitors themselves. Anyhow, it is in the light of their contacts with the Indian scientists, as well as of the advice that Sargent and Hill can give them, that the British Council can then judge best whom to send in the autumn and on what line to proceed. So far, I think the whole business has been initiated in the right way.

5. I hope the same may result from the visit of the industrialists. Dalton, to whom I spoke and wrote[5] about the importance of an early visit, has been quite helpful and I don't suppose that the others will make much difficulty. After all, the important thing is that they should make their personal contacts and feel that British industry is out to co-operate with them and not to boss them. As for difficulties in getting sterling released or capital goods supplied immediately after the war, that would be a universal difficulty and apply to American goods and dollars as well as to British goods and sterling. The great thing is that they should be in early and interest the mind of British industry in India rather than in Czechoslovakia.

[1] No. 440. [2] No. 441. [3] See No. 438, note 13. [4] See No. 325, paras. 11–12.
[5] A letter of 16 March 1944 from Mr Amery to Dr Dalton and Dr Dalton's reply of 21 March are on L/E/8/3605.

6. I am sure you are right in creating a member for Reconstruction. While I use that phrase I am never quite sure myself why you should not at some stage or other, conversationally at least, describe the members of your Executive as Ministers. "Minister" means no more than "Servant of the Crown" and even if in this country it implies a particular form of parliamentary government, it certainly does not do so in many other countries. But to return to the main point, the great thing is that you should get a good man and, as I said in my last letter,[6] I should be inclined to take Mirza Ismail, unless you were prepared to transfer Mudaliar. Whoever it is, he will have to show India that his conceptions are as bold and his methods more practical than those of the Birla scheme.[7] Not that I should recommend crabbing that scheme: on the contrary, I am all for welcoming it in general terms and making these big industrialists feel that the Government of India is both more capable and more willing to help on the industrialisation and development of India than Congress could ever be with its fixed obsession about immediate and unqualified political power.

[Para. 7, on the return of a Dehydration Committee from India; and postscript on an invitation from the B.B.C. to Lord Wavell to give a talk about books, omitted.]

[6] No. 439, paras. 8 and 9. [7] See No. 344, note 4.

449

Viscount Cranborne to Mr MacDonald

Telegram, L/P&J/8/220: f 61

DOMINIONS OFFICE, *30 March 1944*

No. 39 SAVING. Your telegram of 22nd November [1943] No. 2876.[1]

The Secretary of State for India has consulted Government of India[2] about the suggestion of the appointment of a High Commissioner for Canada in India and as a result would now be glad if you would approach Canadian Government as suggested in paragraph 5 of your telegram stating that Government of India would welcome such an appointment on a basis of reciprocity. Perhaps you could also indicate at the same time to the Canadian authorities that if they decide to proceed with the proposal we should be glad if we and the Government of India could be informed in advance of any publication.[3]

[1] Asking Lord Cranborne if he would like an official approach made to the Canadian Government reminding it of previous discussion on the appointment of a Canadian High Commissioner to India and stating H.M.G. would welcome the appointment. L/P&J/8/220: f 67.

[2] See No. 420.

[3] Mr MacDonald replied in telegram 36 Saving of 20 April 1944 that he had approached the Department of External Affairs on the lines suggested. The India Office received nothing further from Canada until 11 April 1945 when the High Commission forwarded a copy of an exchange in the Canadian House of Commons on 6 April 1945. The Prime Minister was asked for information on a press report that the Indian representative had told the Commonwealth Conference then meeting in London that he had a definite promise from Mr Mackenzie King that a Canadian High Commissioner to India would arrive there soon and that negotiations for the exchange of High Commissioners were proceeding. Mr Mackenzie King replied that 'the matter of exchange of high commissioners between Canada and India has been under consideration for some little time. It is wholly correct to say that Canada intends to send a high commissioner to India, and that India intends to send a high commissioner to Canada. The exchange of high commissioners will be reciprocal. The government up to the moment have not been able to decide on the particular person to be appointed as high commissioner from Canada but I hope that an appointment may soon be made.' L/P&J/8/220: ff 56–7, 59.

450

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/25

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *30 March 1944*

D.-O. No. F.-41 (6)-G./41.

I enclose a copy of my telegram No. 678-S, dated 30th March 1944, in which I have summarized my views on the resumption of recruitment to the I.C.S. and I.P. after the war.

2. The decision rests with you, and I have therefore not yet consulted my Executive Council. I have ascertained the views of Governors, as desired in your telegram No. 1334[1] of 9th December, and have also consulted the Home Department. Maxwell at my request sounded Mudaliar, Azizul Haque, and Ambedkar—a representative selection of my Indian colleagues. You have already had a copy of my circular letter of 1st February[2] to Governors and of the Governors' replies,[3] and I do not think I need send you any other documents.

3. Everyone consulted, except Ambedkar, agreed that in some form the recruitment of British Officers must be resumed. Ambedkar seemed to think that India could carry on with the British element already present in the Services. Mudaliar was doubtful of the efficacy of short-term recruitment, and he and Azizul Haque suggested that our needs should be met in part at least by the secondment of officers from the Home Civil Service. I am satisfied, and Maxwell agrees with me, that we must have British recruits.

4. The next question is what terms should be offered to British recruits. It will in due course be for an Indian Government to decide how the Services

[1] No. 272; the date should be 19 December. [2] L/S&G/7/262: f 477. [3] *Ibid.*: ff 454–76.

should be organised and what British element, if any, should be included in them, and we are concerned only as long as the Secretary of State is responsible to Parliament for the efficiency of Indian administration. We cannot say how long the period of the Secretary of State's responsibility will be, but we clearly cannot guarantee a life career to British recruits, nor can we reopen recruitment on terms inconsistent with the public statements of His Majesty's Government's policy towards India. In Maxwell's opinion, with which I agree, there are three possibilities:—

(*a*) recruitment on short-term renewable contracts of, say, five years, which would of course involve the offer of pay higher than that in the ordinary service scales;

(*b*) recruitment for an indefinite period but with express stipulations regarding uncertainty of tenure and compensation. Presumably something on the lines of the present proportionate pension rules would apply—an officer would receive a lump-sum gratuity if discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds within five years of joining, and would thereafter be entitled to a proportionate pension. It might also be necessary to pay lump-sum compensation in addition to proportionate pension on discharge by Government otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds;

(*c*) recruitment on a contract for five years in the first instance, merging thereafter into employment for an indefinite period subject to termination by either party at six months' or a year's notice. Proportionate pension and compensation would be admissible as in (*b*). This arrangement is really a combination of (*a*) and (*b*).

5. Before deciding which of the three possibilities is the best it is necessary to consider the future of Indian recruitment. Maxwell thinks that the recruitment of Indians to the Secretary of State's Services should not be resumed, and that its abandonment would be welcome to Indian opinion. He points out that there is little to choose in quality between Indians recruited to the I.C.S. and I.P. and those joining the corresponding Provincial Services. It is safe to assume that Indian Ministries of the future, both Central and Provincial, will not want to obtain their Indian officials through the Secretary of State, and by resuming Indian recruitment to the I.C.S. and I.P. we shall merely be burdening the Indian Government of the future with an unnecessarily expensive set of Indian officials. He feels that Indians should in future be recruited to a superior grade of Class I Provincial Services, or by the Central Government to a new all-India Service members of which would be allocated to the Provinces and to the Centre, and that the latter alternative is preferable. Mudaliar, Azizul Haque and Ambedkar agree with this view. Of the Governors, only Colville, Dow, and Cunningham favour Provincialization. Casey is

doubtful, and the remainder (except Glancy who suggested a new Central Service) think that Indian recruitment to the Secretary of State's Services should continue. The suggestion made to the Governors was provincialization, and it is possible that more of them might be ready to agree to the new all-India Service; but there is clearly considerable opposition to any change at all.

In some of my weekly letters[4] I have said that it seemed impossible to reopen regular recruitment to the Secretary of State's Services at all. I think now that I was too pessimistic. The future Indian Government will in due course decide what Services it wants and where to recruit them. For the time being our business is to ensure that we hand over a going concern with reasonably contented and efficient Services. We cannot properly assume now that the future Indian Government will wish to lower past standards or (if the British element is to be retained) to place British in a separate category from Indian officers. The essentials are to recruit the same type of man as in the past and to treat British and Indians alike, except in matters in which distinctions based on domicile already exist. I believe that any Indian Government to which we handed over would wish to keep a considerable British element for a considerable time, and would expect a high standard of them, and if this is right it is surely important that we should not now commit ourselves to an inferior Service manned by Indians. We must do everything we can to keep British and Indians on equal terms. For these reasons, though there is much in what Maxwell says about the quality of Indian recruits entering the All-India and the Provincial Services, I am clear that we should try to reopen recruitment as nearly as possible on the old basis both for British and for Indians. Immediate political reactions to this may be unfavourable, but if the transition period is short the methods of recruitment during it do not matter very much, while if it is long the retention of Secretary of State's Services manned entirely by British Officers might have a most deplorable effect.

6. I need not recapitulate paragraph 2 of my telegram, but some amplification about compensation terms is needed. British recruits will take a considerable risk in joining the Service. For the first five years they should be entitled to a gratuity if they are discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds. Thereafter they should have the right to retire on proportionate pension, and, if discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds, should receive a proportionate pension *plus* lump-sum compensation. Indian recruits need far less protection. It must be made clear to them that they are expected to accept changed conditions of service, and will not receive compensation except in circumstances in which compensation gratuities or pensions are payable under the general Service Rules on reduction of establishments. I think this is fair enough. If Indians now in Service succeed

4 See No. 238, para. 7; also No. 278, para. 17.

in securing more liberal terms for themselves (e.g. if they are granted the right to proportionate pension for which they agitate from time to time) the grant of more liberal terms to post-war recruits might have to be considered.

7. Will you please let me know if you want any further advice from me? I can put the matter formally to the Executive Council if you would like their opinion.

Enclosure to No. 450

VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE

TELEGRAM DATED 30TH MARCH 1944

IMPORTANT

SECRET

No. 678–S. Your telegram No. 1334 of 19th December. Post-war recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P. I have consulted Governors and Home Department and Maxwell has sounded Mudaliar, Azizul Haque and Ambedkar.

2. My own conclusions are as follows:—

(*i*) Recruitment of British element must be resumed as soon as possible after cessation of hostilities.

(*ii*) Terms offered to British recruits must be consistent with public statements of His Majesty's Government's policy towards India and must not (repeat not) hold out hopes of life career in India.

(*iii*) Separation of Indian from British element in advance of constitutional change would be unwise. Object should be to recruit both British and Indians of same type as in the past and to treat both alike except in matters in which distinction already exists.

(*iv*) You should therefore plan to reopen recruitment after the war on the old terms subject to a clear warning both to British and Indians that the future of the Services will be decided by an Indian Government when the time comes and to special provisions for compensation. I have not considered details of compensation but presumably British recruits should receive lump-sum gratuity if discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds within five years of joining and should thereafter have right to proportionate pension on present lines *plus* compensation if discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds. Indian recruits should be entitled to compensation only if discharged otherwise than for misconduct or on medical grounds or transferred to employment not comparable to that for which they were recruited, and scale of compensation should be that prescribed in C.S.R. for reductions in establishments.

3. Home Department agree with my (*i*) and (*ii*), but would limit Secretary of State's recruitment to British element and recruit Indian element through Federal Public Services Commission to new All-India Service under Governor-General in Council. For British element they prefer five years' contract in first instance merging thereafter into employment for indefinite period subject to six months or one year's notice by either party and to proportionate pension and compensation rights. Maxwell considers this solution politically and financially more acceptable to Indian opinion than mine. Mudaliar, Azizul Haque and Ambedkar agree with him on the whole. Governors' views vary, but several agree with me.

4. Fuller statement being sent by fast air mail. You have had copy of my letter of 1st February to Governors and of their replies.

451

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *5 April 1944*
Received: 14 April

Your letter of March 23rd[1] to hand. From what you say in paragraphs 3 and 4 of that, it is evident that you are increasingly moving into the position in which, instead of asking His Majesty's Government here to help you in order to cover needs in which India's own requirements and military requirements are confused, you are getting into the position where the Government of India says it can give so much help to the Military, whether S.E.A.C. or Middle East, and no more. That seems to me a sounder position constitutionally[2] as well as tactically, for you are then on the defensive on your own ground and working within your own responsibilities. But it implies a corresponding ability on India's part to do without external help for her own needs, and I am not sure how far you can get on that ground.

2. Meanwhile, I am not clear from paragraph 3 of your letter taken in conjunction with recent telegrams, whether you are still finding 550,000 tons of wheat for the Defence Services, or only 240,000 tons. Rowlands has just this moment arrived and I am holding a meeting of the Cabinet Foodgrains Committee tomorrow afternoon to give him an opportunity of making the

[1] No. 438.

[2] [Note by Amery:] i.e., in so far as India is a separate government. I suppose on strict legal theory I could on Cabinet instructions ask you to overrule your colleagues and decide that India's safety demanded your supplying the military at the expense of civil supplies.

position clear as he sees it, and I can only hope that he will make a definite impression on them. I am also stirring up the Chiefs of Staff on the question of other stores and urgent needs, with regard to which India's insistent demands have only been met to a very small extent.[3] There again, your telegram[4] saying that India can supply no more after this than a certain limited list may be helpful in securing decisions.

3. I have read with much interest Casey's letter to you of March 11th[5] and your reply to it of 18th March[6] received by the last bag. There is much in what Casey says which is reassuring and I hope that the hopeful tone of his recent broadcast will have had a good effect on confidence. I was also glad to see that the price of rice in Bengal fell between 1 and 2 rupees in some places in the week ending 1st April. That is very good news because I feel strongly that you are right that unless the price can be got down people may still starve not because there is not plenty of rice but because they cannot pay for it. This seems to me to be the greatest danger this year and I should be glad to know whether you and Casey think that Rs. 10 is low enough.

Casey writes very much from the provincial standpoint and I confess that from my point of view it is an alarming proposition that the procurement programme for the province might be cut by nearly half because the needs of deficit districts within Bengal can be met without purchasing more. I can understand that the programme may need to be reduced on the ground that such large purchases will raise prices and encourage hoarding but that does not seem to be Casey's reason. I should have thought his object should be to procure as much as possible and be able to put by something substantial for the Central or Provincial reserve against next year when the crop may not be so good and outside help more difficult than ever, or for use in exchange for wheat now being supplied to Ceylon. Bengal has had a lot of help from other parts of India and I should have thought she should be expected to make every effort to return some of it this year or next to those who may be harder hit this time than she is.

4. I see that owing to military requirements arrangements are being made to withdraw from civil duties in Bengal at the end of April the military medical relief units now operating there and that of the 56 military subdivisional Health Officers and 8 Deputy Assistant Directors of Hygiene, 16 and 6 respectively will also be removed by the end of May. I presume that either the number of cases requiring treatment has sufficiently diminished to enable the Military medical relief units to be dispensed with or that they will be replaced by personnel recruited by the Bengal Government. As regards the military Public Health Officers I see that Cotter in his Report[7] on his visit to Bengal in January said that the concensus of opinion among the civil and military authorities whom he consulted was that it would be fatal to remove these officers until Civil Health

Officers of equal calibre are obtainable and that this would mean recruiting doctors of the type on which the I.M.S. depend for their recruits. He therefore expressed the hope that it would be found possible to leave the military Health Officers as well as 8 Deputy Assistant Directors of Hygiene in Bengal for at least twelve months. I recognise of course that particularly with more lively operations in progress and I am afraid more casualties than till recently, military considerations must be paramount, but I presume that after making allowances for these considerations you are satisfied that the reduction proposed can be made without serious risk or that suitable replacements will be available.

5. I am sorry that you were not able to carry your increase of railway rates, but am by no means altogether surprised. I gather travelling just now in India is incredibly uncomfortable and the ordinary citizen very naturally resents the idea of paying more for his discomfort. But it all adds to the inflation problem for next year and to the general necessity for setting some limit to the calls upon India's capacity.

6. I had a good talk with Inglis on his return and was very favourably impressed. He is by no means unreasonably critical of Indian railways and speaks well of Benthall and many of the senior Indian staff whom he came across. It is in the subordinate Indian staff that he feels that the chief weakness lies. In this connection he gave me an offhand division of India which is interesting and may have something in it, namely, between the India that is limp and depressed and the India that is virile and cheerful. In the former category he includes the U.P., Bihar and Bengal, while North-East, North-West and Madras struck him as belonging to the latter. I am afraid we cannot get him as successor to Wilson and are trying hard to see whether a good man can be found here.

7. I hope that there will be plenty of real interest for your research scientists to look into when they come over here, not only in purely scientific research as to which they will no doubt be duly posted by the Royal Society, but also in industrial research. I have spoken to the Chairman of the General Electric Company which has the biggest electric research organisation in this country, and they are very anxious to help. So are Imperial Chemical Industries. I don't think I mentioned to you in my last letter that I.C.I. have been doing some very interesting research work into the multiplication of fish life by using ordinary fertilizer to increase the animal and vegetable plankton both in fresh and in salt water. There might be quite a big thing for India in this. Then there is also a very wide range of chemical processes which Weizmann has been

[3] A letter of 1 April on this subject from Sir D. Monteath to the Secretary of the Chiefs of Staff Committee is on L/WS/1/582.

[4] 2275 of 29 March. *Ibid.* [5] See No. 430, note 7. [6] L/E/8/3340.

[7] See No. 333, note 4.

working at in a laboratory here, by which vegetable cellulose and starch can be converted into high octane fuel, lubricating oil, yeast foods, artificial rubber, and plastics. All these, except the yeast food, are at present only derived from mineral oil. But the possibility of making their equivalents from agricultural produce is very interesting and may be very important for India.

8. I was very much interested in reading Hill's "Notes and Suggestions"[8] and think his idea of the first-class medical centre, Delhi, is one that is well worth following up. As regard the centralization of research under the Member for Planning and Development, I confess I do not know enough about the working of our own research system here to be certain of its advantages. But even if the separate departments retain their own research workers, there is obviously a case for some central research department and for its exercising a measure of co-ordinating influence.

9. I am sure you are right in what you say in paragraph 9 of your letter about getting the general public in India interested in Government's reconstruction plans, and having those plans presented to the public in a readable form. It was old General Booth of the Salvation Army who, when rebuked for using all the popular tunes for his hymns, said that he did not see why the Devil should have all the best tunes. So I do not see why Birla or Roy or anybody else should draw up more entertaining and interesting pictures of India's future than the Government itself.

10. Iven Mackay seems to have made a good start, judging at any rate by a broadcast or interview which I read the other day. I hope you will get the right man for his *vis-à-vis* at Canberra. I am sure there is going to be an opening for a big trade between India and Australia after the war and also, I hope, for a better understanding of the nature of Commonwealth relations through it. As regards the advisership here, I have in the last few days telegraphed[9] to you expressing my real doubts about taking on Shafa'at if you can possibly find something else for him to do. I gather he is really primarily a historian and more suited to academic than to active political work.

11. Wingate's death[10] is a great loss. He was an extraordinary fellow with that touch of genius which is sometimes not very far from madness, but with real inspiration and leadership. I won't attempt to discuss the Burma operations but will only say that if we could have dropped a similar force behind the Germans on the Italian front, it would have been infinitely more effective than the Anzio bridgehead. As for the wider field of war, it looks to me as if the Germans were firmly determined to defeat our attempt at a Second Front in Western Europe and prepared to let go a great deal in the East to ensure that. They still have plenty of other people's ground to retreat over on that side and the loss of that ground and even of the Rumanian oilfields may be partially

compensated by less coal and oil required for transport. On the other hand, the one thing they do not want is an effective Second Front well established and in occupation of France—a mere enlarged bridgehead or concentration camp for British and American troops is what they are after, even if they cannot actually prevent a landing.

[Para. 12, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy's future employment, omitted.]

[8] See No. 438, note 13. [9] Not printed. [10] In an air crash near Imphal on 24 March.

452

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/247: ff 102–3

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *6 April 1944*

No. 499

Political interest has centred round Jinnah's recent visit to Lahore. He has been preaching to all and sundry that "Pakistan" is the panacea for all evils. But he has carefully avoided any reasoned explanation of where it begins and ends and what benefits it will confer. He might make an ideal leader of a Demolition Squad, but anything in the way of constructive suggestion seems foreign to his nature. His conversations with Khizar were brought to a premature end by the death of the Premier's father, General Sir Umar Hayat Khan Tiwana—a sad event which has robbed the Province of a much respected and attractive personality and has incidentally aroused a wave of sympathy in favour of his son. Jinnah's attempts to enlist the support of Chhotu Ram and Baldev Singh have met with no success. Manohar Lal, apart from a few sneering remarks, he has left severely alone. Abdul Haye appears to have succeeded in blocking the bowling. The only Minister who has shown any inclination to dance to Jinnah's tune is the unstable Shaukat. The general opinion is that up to date Jinnah has made very little headway. Many of the Muslim M.L.As, especially rural representatives, have strongly resented his dictatorial attitude and some have gone so far as to threaten resignation from the Muslim League. There are no doubt some Muslims who from personal motives would be ready to desert the Unionist Party; their number at present is variously estimated at something between 10 and 25, but might increase considerably if an election were coming off in the near future and a fanatical wind were blowing in favour of the League candidates. On non-Muslims Jinnah has made a most unfavourable impression and with the possible exception of a handful of Achhuts, etc. it is unlikely that he would find any support in this quarter. Jinnah's offensive has now been definitely directed against the retention of the label "Unionist" as applied to

the Ministerial Party. He is not of course consistent in his line of attack, sometimes he says that the Unionist Party has never existed at all, sometimes he suggests that its life was terminated by the Sikander–Jinnah Pact,[1] sometimes he denies that there was ever any pact between himself and Sikander. In his franker moments he has given out that unless the Unionist Label is discarded and the Ministry is called a Muslim League Party, he and his followers cannot expect to be given credit for any popular reforms which the Punjab Government have brought about. Anyhow, he has delivered an ultimatum that the Unionist Label must be abandoned and he says he is coming back to Lahore in a fortnight's time to carry on the campaign. Meanwhile it is likely that the Unionist[s] will take steps to rally their forces, but there is undoubtedly more trouble ahead.

[1] See No. 73, note 2.

453

War Cabinet

Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements. I.F.R. (44) 4th Meeting

L/E/8/3323: ff 213–16, 208

Those present at this meeting held in the Committee Room, India Office, on 6 April 1944 at 3 pm were: Mr Amery (in the Chair), Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Lord Cherwell

Also present were: Sir James Grigg, The Earl of Munster, Sir Archibald Rowlands, Sir D. Monteath, Sir Gilbert Laithwaite, Mr G. H. Baxter, Mr T. Wilson, Mr A. Dibdin

THE COMMITTEE had before them a copy of a telegram No. 628–S[1] from the Viceroy to the Secretary of State for India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, in introducing Sir Archibald Rowlands, referred to his present and past experience on Indian problems. He would be invited to inform the Committee verbally of the Viceroy's views about the food situation.

He added that hitherto the Viceroy had based his demands on aggregated civil and military requirements, but in this telegram had distinguished between the two. It was now clear that out of 724 thousand tons of wheat which the Viceroy claimed were required for military purposes, he felt able only to allocate 550 thousand tons: he had so informed the Commander-in-Chief, South East Asia Command, who had in turn communicated with the Chiefs of Staff.[2]

SIR ARCHIBALD ROWLANDS said that the Viceroy wished that two points should be specially made. Firstly, he thought the issue so important that in view of the possibility of a breakdown, the Americans should now be associated with us. Secondly, there was a very serious risk that unless he could get the grain for which he was asking he would be unable to control prices and the procurement plans could not be fulfilled with resultant widespread distress and famine leading to economic collapse in India. In that event the Viceroy would in all probability fail to procure even the 550 thousand tons of wheat which he estimates that he will be able to procure with the aid of the imports for which he asks on the basis of a reasonable degree of public confidence. The Government of India must be in a position to stand off the market to control grain prices and to secure the surplus grain from the 50 million small cultivators.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT said that so far as he was concerned the position remained that no shipping could be found except by cutting operational programmes.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR questioned whether an absolute shortage of food grains had been or was likely to be the cause of famine. In his view the situation was largely brought about by the Bengal merchants for political purposes.

He also questioned whether, given that price and market could not be controlled without reserves, the quantity at stake was not too small a proportion of the total crop of 55 million tons to enable operations on the market to be effective.

SIR ARCHIBALD ROWLANDS said the point must be considered in relation to quantities in surplus Provinces only which in the case of wheat amounted to 900 thousand tons, and which could not be procured without reserves in hand. He agreed that a good deal of the difficulty was attributable to political agitation, but the inability of the Government of Bengal to procure sufficient rice was mainly due to the large number of small cultivators holding off the market through fear of a recurrence of famine, hopes for higher prices, building up of normal carry-over which had been absorbed last year and through lack of consumer goods.

THE MINISTER OF FOOD informed the Committee that although the supply position of rice had now improved and the importation of the required amount of rice from Brazil to Ceylon would not now affect the supplies to this country, in his view the only practical solution was to send 150 thousand tons of rice out of the Indian crop into Ceylon.

SIR ARCHIBALD ROWLANDS said that the Government of India had accepted the Food Grains Policy Report[3] and was pledged not to export rice. If it

[1] No. 440. [2] See No. 440, note 4. [3] See No. 197, note 2.

became known that they were doing so the Opposition in Bengal would bring pressure to bear on the small farmers to hold on to their crops and a crisis would be precipitated. If the position could be held until after the next *aman* crop, and it were a good one, exports might be possible.

A general discussion followed in which the following points were made:—

(1) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR observed, and the Committee agreed, that it was for His Majesty's Government in the last resort to decide whether the available supplies in India should be applied to supply the Defence forces or the civil population.

(2) In deciding how much grain was to be handed over to the military, the Viceroy would in the first instance have to act in accordance with the majority of his Council. Legally, the Secretary of State could override the Viceroy in Council, but should this not be accepted by the Viceroy or his Council a serious constitutional issue might arise.

(3) Wheat may be substituted by rice in urban areas, but not generally elsewhere.

(4) The fear was expressed that if we took special measures in a year when there was a bumper crop, His Majesty's Government would be committed to still further assistance when the crops were not so good. It might be that whatever sacrifices were made would be defeated by political action.

(5)[4] It was observed by the Paymaster-General that strong measures might be justified by the profiteering activities of certain sections of the community. Some members of the Committee felt, however, that such measures would be extremely difficult to enforce.

(6) THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA in summing up observed that the discussion showed that three alternative courses were open:—

'X'

(a) that the shipping required to carry the additional wheat imports requested by the Viceroy should be supplied by us, though the Committee were agreed that this could only be done at the expense of some operational programme;
(b) a request for assistance should be made to the Americans;
(c) the Viceroy should be instructed that the Government of India must find the wheat required for the military demand even at the expense of the essential needs of the civil population in India. It was recognized that this might have serious political and economic repercussions, and might seriously jeopardize India's economic stability as a base for operations.

The Committee was not in a position to decide between these courses and could only report them to the War Cabinet.

THE COMMITTEE:—

(1) endorsed the statement of the Secretary of State for India at 'X' above;
(2) agreed that the choice between these alternatives could only be taken by the War Cabinet.

[4] In the draft minutes this para. read: 'It was observed on behalf of the Paymaster General that strong measures might be justified by the political activities of certain sections of the community. The Committee felt, however, that such measures would be extremely difficult to enforce.' L/E/8/3323: f 215.

454

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, CALCUTTA, *8 April 1944*

Many thanks for your interesting letters of 24th[1] and 29th March.[2] I missed the bag of 6th April, and this letter, which is written from Calcutta, will, I hope, catch the bag from New Delhi on the 10th.

2. I am having a useful, but rather strenuous tour. I started with a few hours at Gaya, and then travelled by train to Kodarma which is the centre of the mica mining industry. I inspected one of the biggest mines in the Kodarma neighbourhood, and went on to a very well run factory belonging to an Indian concern at Kodarma, where crude mica is prepared for export. In spite of the great war demand, the mica industry is not in a healthy state. Under the Permanent Settlement[3] title in minerals goes with title in the surface, and there has, I gather, been a lot of speculative mining by people without much capital, some of which has been dishonestly injurious to the better organised mines. There is little standardization, and I am told that the Indian mica, which is the best in the world, suffers owing to the disorganisation of the trade. I have asked Ambedkar to see what can be done to put the industry on a better footing. The problem is not an easy one as there are many vested interests, and proposals for rationalisation are likely to arouse a good deal of opposition. I think a good impartial Committee, consisting perhaps of a High Court Judge, a geologist, a mining engineer, a representative of Labour, and a business man, with an official as Secretary, might give the Government of India and the Bihar Government some guide on the regulation necessary.

From Kodarma I travelled by car to Dhanbad, the centre of the Jharia coalfield. I visited several mines at Dhanbad, and at one of them went underground to

[1] No. 439. [2] No. 448. [3] See No. 193, note 2.

see the sand-stowing operations. I was not favourably impressed by the Central Government's School of Mines, rather a dingy and neglected institution, the up-to-date Rescue Station, which is run from a cess on coal despatches, seemed more modern and alive. The colliery people at Dhanbad were worried about labour, and particularly about the food supply. There has been a controversy over the scale of the ration to be allowed; I gather that Ambedkar originally favoured a high scale, which was adopted at the collieries, and Mudie then stepped in and pressed for a reduction. A compromise was finally reached under which the basic ration was reduced, but the workers became entitled to a supplement calculated on attendance. The colliery people represented that their primitive labour force did not understand all this chopping and changing, and that the original ration should be maintained. I talked the matter over with them and with Young, the Coal Commissioner, and hope that it may be settled satisfactorily after further discussion with the Food Department at New Delhi. I was glad to see that Tatas, one of whose collieries I inspected, are putting in improved quarters and pithead baths for their workpeople.

From Dhanbad, I drove to Asansol where my wife joined me, and we then flew to Chittagong. From Chittagong we visited Cox's Bazar, where my wife and Mrs Casey looked at hospitals and I inspected work on the new airfield, where some Madras Pioneers and a Cochin Labour Battalion were working well in spite of fairly heavy casualties sustained by the Pioneers in an air raid on 25th March. We returned to Calcutta via Comilla on 6th April. Between us we saw several hospitals at Comilla, and I also had a talk with Slim about the operations on the Eastern Frontier. I also saw a couple of orphanages for victims of the late famine; and had the usual countless short interviews with local people, which I find a bit trying and tiring but cannot well be omitted.

Throughout the tour so far I have found everyone, civil and military, in good heart, and fairly confident about the food situation. There is going to be a very difficult time from the end of the rains onwards, but the District officers in Chittagong and Tippera districts seemed to think they will pull through. As things are going at present, however, there is not likely to be any surplus for export.

I have just been on a day trip with Casey to the Birbhum district. I move on on the 9th April afternoon to Patna and thence to New Delhi on the 12th. My wife returns to New Delhi from Calcutta on the 10th.

3. I agree with what you say in your letter of 24th March[4] about the delay in the Italian campaign. This probably brought home to people both in the U.K. and in America the difficulty of opposed landings. There is not much fresh news from the Eastern Frontier. Things have gone well in Arakan, and I have no doubt that the operations further north will eventually be successful, but Slim was definitely anxious about the next ten days or so. I don't think

S.E.A.C. have been very happy about their publicity; their communiqués have been confusing to the public and have done little to allay the growing uneasiness in some parts of India. Wingate is a great loss.[5] The cause of the crash is not known, but the pilot obviously lost control for some reason. The Japanese claim that they shot the aircraft down is, I think, entirely false. It was after dark.

4. In spite of the gradual return of official confidence in Bengal, the food situation is still critical. Hallett and Twynam are both gloomy about the damage done by the recent unseasonable rain, which has been almost unprecedented. I hope it may not be as bad as they fear, but there must have been considerable damage to the wheat, and barley and gram have not escaped. There was a renewed attack on the Bengal Government in Council on the 29th March. This was probably due to some extent to propaganda by Bengali Members of the Legislature. But it cannot be denied that the progress of procurement in Bengal is slow; that the reduced target of 600,000 tons may not prove adequate; that the Bengal Government have been diverting supplies given them for Calcutta by the Central Government to their deficit districts and that one at least of the purchasing agents employed by the Bengal Government has been unsatisfactory. The feeling that the Bengal Government are not sufficiently energetic, combined with uneasiness caused by the reports from the United Provinces and the Central Provinces, has depressed my colleagues, and although I reassured them as well as I could about assistance from His Majesty's Government, they all said that adequate imports were quite vital, and that 250,000 tons was nothing like adequate. Purshottamdas Thakurdas wrote the other day asking for information about imports, and I had a comforting reply sent to him. But it is clear that apprehension is growing, and once it is generally realised that we can count on only another 200,000 tons of wheat from abroad during 1944, we shall be unable to hold our price controls. Except in Assam, Bengal, and Orissa, there has been real progress in organisation, and, given a fair chance, I think we could show the country that we can control prices and prevent famine. Even in the three most backward Provinces there has been an improvement, though nothing can make up for the absence of a large Revenue staff.

5. Two very ticklish subjects were discussed in Council on 31st March. It had been decided that our attitude on the railway fares question should be settled after the discussion on the Finance Bill and before the end of the session. Benthall stated from the railway point of view the case for maintaining the 25 per cent. increase in fares. He thought the increase justified on the merits as a means of reducing unnecessary travel, and also for the creation of a fund for amenities for lower class passengers. Raisman dealt with the anti-inflationary

[4] Paras. omitted from No. 439. [5] See No. 451, note 10.

aspects of the proposal, and said that, if it would make matters easier for his colleagues, he was prepared to reduce the increase to 12½ per cent. I pointed out that the matter was one on which unanimity was most desirable and I hoped Council would support the Finance Member. The Chief, Maxwell and Benthall supported him, but the Chief was by no means wholly convinced. Jogendra Singh, one of the strongest original opposers of the increase, was not present, and of the remaining Indian Members, six spoke with considerable vehemence against any increase at all. The other three were in favour of the reduced increase proposed by Raisman though one of them was obviously rather reluctant. Seven of my colleagues were thus for Raisman and six against. All of them were a little irritable owing perhaps to a long and rather trying session of the Legislature, and I thought it inadvisable to vote with the majority and thus to force through a proposal which the Indian majority detested. I therefore said that while I regretted the opposition to the proposal, I felt it must be dropped. I sent you a telegram[6] about this; you will, I know, be disappointed, but I am sure there was nothing else to be done.

A memorandum by Khare on the South African problem might have led to a second heated discussion; but two new telegrams from Shafa'at Ahmad Khan enabled me to suggest that Council need not go into the details of economic sanctions but might send Shafa'at Ahmad Khan temperately worded instructions to the effect that while the Government of India welcome negotiations between the Union Government and the Indian community in South Africa, feeling in India was such that we must [act] before very long unless we receive an assurance that some concrete action would be taken. The only action likely to satisfy India would be the repeal of the Pegging legislation[7] of last year, or at least the "de-proclaiming" of the areas affected by it. Khare agreed to something on these lines, and the other Members, fatigued by the long controversy on railway fares, also agreed, without discussion. I arranged for Khare's drafts to be submitted to me, and I received them during my present tour. They seemed to me intemperate, and I have suggested extensive modifications to them. If he does not accept them, I shall have to discuss the drafts with him in detail on my return.

6. I am telegraphing[8] to you asking you again to accept Shafa'at Ahmad Khan as an Adviser. The tone of his telegrams from South Africa is thoroughly bad, and I get the impression that he is egging the Indian community on. As Union Ministers are fond of saying that the Indians in the Union are South African nationals and that we have no business to interfere, the High Commissioner must be discreet. It would be very awkward if it could be represented that negotiations between the Indian community and the Union Government had broken down owing to his intervention. At the same time his attitude probably strikes Khare as reasonable and proper, and if he were recalled and not provided

for elsewhere, he might be regarded as a martyr. It would be a real help if you could take him off my hands.

7. I do not expect to makea selection of the new Member for Planning and Development until I have an opportunity of seeing Ardeshir Dalal towards the end of April. I very much doubt if Mirza Ismail would do. I have only seen him once. . . .[9] The appointment of Regional Reconstruction Commissioners, which you suggest in paragraph 10 of your letter of 24th March, would not be easy, though both for electrical development and for irrigation it is, I think, recognised that provincial boundaries do not very much matter. While I was at Gaya on my present tour, I flew over some possible hydro-electric sites on the Son and Rihand rivers on the borders of Bihar and the United Provinces. Schemes for the use of these rivers are being worked out by the United Provinces and Bihar in consultation. An Indian State, Rewa, may also be closely concerned. There is another big scheme for the use of the Tons and Giri on the borders of the Punjab and the United Provinces, and a third scheme on the boundary of Madras and Orissa. The Provinces would probably resent any attempt to regiment them, but are gradually learning to co-operate under guidance from Mathews, the Electrical Commissioner, and Stampe who has done very useful work in connection with the "Grow More Food" campaign and whose enthusiasm has taken him a good deal beyond small irrigation schemes.

8. Hill's "Notes and Suggestions"[10] are being considered, and I think some of them will be adopted fairly soon. There will be a battle royal about the concentration of research under one Member of Council, and on this subject it may be difficult and perhaps impossible, to secure agreement. I quite agree that the visit of the Indian scientists to the U.K. will be very useful to the British Council, and that it may be possible to establish further contacts next cold weather.

9. I am very grateful for what you have done about the visit of the Indian industrialists to the U.K. I am sure that if the party can be assembled and prevailed upon to go in spite of the discomforts of the journey and the possibility of warlike experiences at the other end, the visit will be most valuable. Azizul Haque has been asked to get on with the preliminaries, but these things seem to take a very long time. For example Azizul Haque has not yet given me any information about the result of his offer to Shanmukham Chetty of the Australian High Commissionership.

10. In a letter of 15th March[11] you asked what progress was being made in our attempts to reorganise the Indian Institute of International Affairs. Sultan

[6] 699–S of 3 April. L/PO/10/18. [7] See No. 82, note 6. [8] Not printed.
[9] Personal comment omitted. [10] See No. 438, note 13. [11] L/I/1/729.

Ahmed has been very active, and I understand that the Institute is showing some signs of life. The appointment of a permanent Secretary and a Research Officer has been approved, and as soon as certain difficulties about suitable accommodation are overcome, a library will be established, and the production of pamphlets will be undertaken. Meetings this season have shown an improvement, and discussions have been lively. Sultan Ahmed is well aware of the importance of selecting a good team for the Commonwealth Relations Conference in London.[12] He is anxious to lead the delegation himself, and I will discuss with him on my return to New Delhi the composition of his team. In the meantime he has approached many prominent people with a request for the preparation of papers on a long list of subjects within the agenda agreed upon at Washington.[13]

[Para. 11, on the Indus Commission, omitted.]

12. Council on 31st March said goodbye to Maxwell with real regret. He has been respected and liked even by the opposition, and will be a very great loss to Shankar, the *Hindustan Times*' cartoonist. I had a talk with Shankar the other day, a nice little man, but who was obviously studying me with a professional eye.

[Para. 13, on the post of Director of the Intelligence Bureau; para. 14, on an art exhibition in Calcutta; and para. 15, on an invitation to Lord Wavell to make a literary broadcast, omitted.]

16. Thank you for your information about "Quit Britain". I am seeing whether any of the books you mention are in the library at Viceroy's House. I am glad the Eaton Square bomb did so little damage.

17. I am most grateful indeed to you for the very stout fight you have put up on the case for importing foodgrains, and am interested to see that the Chiefs of Staff recommended another 230,000 tons.[14] I hope that between us we shall be able to wear your colleagues down.

[12] The Third British Commonwealth Relations Conference met in London from 17 February to 3 March 1945.

[13] The Committee which prepared the agenda for the Third British Commonwealth Relations Conference met in New York from 17–18 January 1944.

[14] Cf. No. 432.

455

Mr Gandhi to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/623: ff 111–12

DETENTION CAMP, *9 April 1944*

Dear Friend,

I have your letter of 23rd March[2] received by me on the 3rd instant. Please accept my thanks for it.

I take up the general matter first.

You have sent me a frank reply. I propose to reciprocate your courtesy by being perfectly frank. Friendship to be true demands frankness even though it may sometime appear unpleasant. If anything I say offends you, please accept my apology in advance.

It is a pity that you have refused to deal with important points raised in my letter.

Your letter is a plea for co-operation by the Congress in the present administration and failing that in planning for the future. In my opinion, this requires equality between the parties and mutual trust. But equality is absent and Government distrust of the Congress can be seen at every turn. The result is that suspicion of Government is universal. Add to this the fact that Congressmen have no faith in the competence of the Government to ensure India's future good. This want of faith is based upon bitter experience of the past and present conduct of the British administration of India. Is it not high time that you co-operated with the people of India through their elected representatives instead of expecting co-operation from them?

All this was implied in the August resolution.[3] The sanction behind the demand in the resolution was, not violence, but self-suffering. Anyone, be he Congressman or other, who acted against this rule of conduct had no authority to use the Congress name for his action. But I see that this resolution repels you as it did Lord Linlithgow. You know that I have joined issue on the point. I have seen nothing since to alter my view. You have been good enough to credit me with "intelligence", "experience" and "acumen". Let me say that all these three gifts have failed to make me realise that the effect of the Congress resolution "must be to hamper the prosecution of the war". The responsibility for what followed the hasty arrests of Congressmen must rest solely on the Government. For, they invited the crisis, not the authors of the resolution.

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 17 April 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State. Mr Gandhi's letter is reprinted in *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942—April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944), pp. 124–5 and in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 307–9.

[2] No. 445; the date should be 28 March.

[3] Vol. II, No. 470.

You remind me that you were Commander-in-Chief at the time. How much better it would have been for all concerned if confidence in the immeasurable strength of arms had ruled your action instead of fear of a rebellion! Had the Government stayed their hand at the time, surely, all the bloodshed of those months would have been avoided. And it is highly likely that the Japanese menace would have become a thing of the past. Unfortunately it was not to be. And so the menace is still with us, and what is more, the Government are pursuing a policy of suppression of liberty and truth. I have studied the latest ordinance[4] about the detenus, and I recall the Rowlatt Act of 1919.[5] It was popularly called the Black Act. As you know it gave rise to an unprecedented agitation. That Act pales into insignificance before the series of ordinances that are being showered from the Viceregal throne. Martial Law in effect governs not one province[6] as in 1919, but the whole of India. Things are moving from bad to worse.

You say, "It is clear to me that you had lost confidence in our ability to defend India and were prepared to take advantage of our supposed military straits to gain political advantage." I must deny both the charges. I venture to suggest that you should follow the golden rule, and withdraw your statement and suspend judgment till you have submitted the evidence in your possession to an impartial tribunal and obtained its verdict. I confess that I do not make the request with much confidence. For, in dealing with Congressmen and others Government have combined the prosecutor, judge and jailor in the same person and thus made proper defence impossible on the part of the accused. Judgments of courts are being rendered nugatory by fresh ordinances. No man's freedom can be said to be safe in this extraordinary situation. You will probably retort that it is an exigency of the war. I wonder?

As I visualise India today, it is one vast prison containing four hundred million souls. You are its sole custodian. The Government prisons are prisons within this prison. I agree with you that whilst you hold the views expressed in your letter under reply, the proper place for one like me is a Government prison. And unless there is a change of heart, view and policy on the part of the Government, I am quite content to remain your prisoner. Only, I hope, you will listen to the request[7] made by me through the proper channels to remove me and my fellow prisoners to some other prison where the cost of our detention need not be even one tenth of what it is today.

As to my complaint[8] about Mr Butler's statement and later the Home Secretary's, I have received two letters[9] from the Home Department in reply. I am sorry to say, they have appeared to me highly unsatisfactory. They ignore patent facts, and betray an obstinate refusal to face truth even on a wholly non-political issue. My correspondence with the Home Department continues. I invite your attention to it, if you can spare the time and are interested in the subject.

I am glad and thankful that Shri. Mirabai's (Miss Slade's) case is being considered in the light of what I said about her in my letter.[10]

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[4] Ordinance III of 1944. See No. 340, note 5.

[5] In 1917 a Committee of Enquiry was appointed under Mr Justice Rowlatt to investigate revolutionary conspiracies in India. Its Report (Cd. 9190) produced evidence of subversive activity and as a result two Acts were passed early in 1919 which allowed judges to try political cases without juries in specific cases and gave Provincial Governments powers of internment. Because of widespread protest the powers in these Acts were never used.

[6] The Punjab. [7] See No. 430, note 19. [8] See No. 417, note 5.

[9] Copies of these letters, dated 21 and 30 March 1944, are on L/P&J/8/622. [10] No. 417.

456

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/193: f 159

GOVERNOR'S CAMP, CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR, *9 April 1944*

CONFIDENTIAL

No. R. 9–G.C.P.

My dear Lord Wavell,

Many thanks for Your Excellency's letter dated the 31st March 1944.[1] I was particularly interested in the paragraphs dealing with the *entente* between the Congress and the Moslem League over the budget. I shed no tears over the decision to abandon the proposal to increase railway fares but I confess to having felt some uneasiness about the understanding between the Congress and the League. I know that many hard things are said about Jinnah. But I often wonder where we should have been had not Jinnah foreseen how fatal it would be to Moslem interests to support Congress pretensions which eventually developed into a plan for a National Government which was undoubtedly the basis on which the Congress hoped to get out of the war as much as possible when the Japanese menace became acute. I am glad to know that you doubt whether the Assembly re-union is of real importance and I myself fail to see how it can be in view of the Pakistan issue. We have travelled a long way from the concordat of 1920 in connection with the Khilafatist movement.[2]

[1] Not printed.

[2] The Sultan of Turkey was Caliph or supreme head of the Muslim world. The dismemberment of the Turkish Empire after the war of 1914–18 led in India to a Khilafat (Caliphate) agitation—lasting from 1919 to 1921—which demanded the restoration of the Turkish Empire to its pre-war position. Under Mr Gandhi's leadership, Congress made common cause with this agitation in the hope of uniting Hindus and Muslims.

457

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *12 April 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

My last letter[1] caught the bag of 10th April, and I have nothing new from you to answer. But I may as well write briefly by the bag of 13th April to let you know that I am just back from tour, and that while I am at New Delhi my letters will, as usual, go by the Thursday bag.

2. I had a long talk with Casey about the food situation in Bengal on Sunday, 9th April.[2] He said he was satisfied that everyone was working as hard as possible on procurement, and that prodding from the Centre on this subject would do no good. He had himself pressed for the diversion to the deficit districts of foodgrains supplied by us for Calcutta, and had two very good reasons for doing so. In the first place, owing to the shortage of railway wagons, much of the rice procured in Bengal from the *Aman* crop cannot at present be moved from the northern and western districts. The quantity taken from the Calcutta stocks is very much less than the quantity procured by the Bengal Government and immobilized for lack of transport. Secondly, while the Calcutta consumer demands rice of good quality, the districts will readily consume inferior stuff. It is well known that the rice supplied to Calcutta was of very mixed quality, and there have been complaints about this. Casey's officers say that it will go down all right in the districts where even in ordinary times people sell most of their good quality rice and buy inferior rice for their own consumption. Casey agreed that one of the firms appointed as purchasing agents was unsatisfactory and he was about to have the partners on the mat. My general impression is that Bengal will have a very difficult time at least up to the end of 1944, but Casey is far-sighted and energetic, and I shall restrain Council from attempting to interfere. In particular, it would, in Casey's opinion, be futile to change the system of procurement through agents, to which Council from time to time object. He points out that in peace time the internal rice trade in Bengal has no real organisation and there is no alternative to the employment by the Bengal Government of a few large firms. It would be quite impossible to use the innumerable small men who constitute the "normal trade channels". On the whole the District Officers seemed in much better heart, and the conference of District Magistrates recently called by Casey must have done a lot to improve morale.

I explained the Bengal situation to Council this evening and they seemed quite reassured.[3]

3. Reports about the damage done by the recent rain in the United Provinces and the Central Provinces are still disturbing, and Glancy has just told me in a personal letter that the yield of the wheat harvest in the Punjab may be reduced by 250,000 tons. It is very hard to say what the damage has actually been. In Bihar Mudie did not think it serious, and some planters whom I saw in Muzaffarpur on 10th April had no special complaints. The Food Department are inclined to take an optimistic view, and up to date prices do not seem to have reacted as sharply as one would expect them to do if the trade estimate of the damage were high. I will keep you informed as further news comes in.

4. You are likely to receive the official telegrams about the South African business before long. Khare has accepted my suggestions, and although I am sorry the telegrams go even in their present form, they are a good deal better than those he originally submitted.

5. I shall be in New Delhi now until the first week in May when I contemplate a short trip to Sikkim.

[1] No. 454.

[2] Notes of this talk and of another discussion between Lord Wavell, Mr Casey and others on 4 April, recorded by P.S.V., are in Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 177–9.

[3] The minutes of this meeting are *ibid.*, pp. 181–4.

458

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *13 April 1944*
Received: 22 April

The Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrains Requirements met[1] before Easter, and Rowlands put the position before them quite clearly. Whether he made much of an impression I am not sure. Leathers adhered to his position that no shipping can be found except at the expense of operational commitments. We concluded that the Committee could carry the matter no further and that I should report to the Cabinet that the alternatives were to find the ships even at the expense of operational needs, to approach the Americans for assistance, or to accept either a shortage of supplies for the Services in India or a shortage for civilian requirements with the serious risks of another disaster of which you have warned us. I shall go to the Cabinet again before long, but I am at present awaiting developments. The Chiefs of Staff, as a result of

[1] No. 453.

a letter from Monteath,[2] are now re-examining the whole economic basis for operations based on India and I think it may be easier to get the food position reopened in that general context rather than as a separate matter. I shall, however, not let it rest too long.

2. Firoz arrived on Monday night and I was able to take him to Tuesday's Cabinet, which I think he must have found very interesting, a number of major matters of foreign policy being up and dealt with by Winston, who for the time being is taking on the Foreign Office in addition to his other duties in order to give Anthony a short holiday. You may have seen in the telegrams that there has been an idea that Anthony should drop the Foreign Office in order to concentrate on the work of leading the House of Commons and I think he must do so in the end. For the moment, however, Winston has persuaded him to carry on for a little bit longer with both duties and has sweetened the pill by giving him a few days off.

3. Kashmir arrived yesterday. I had to be at a Cabinet Committee, but B. Willingdon received him in tremendous state and introduced all the other official representatives to him. I have just had a long talk with him and he seems quite amiable and keenly interested in the work before him. They certainly have both come at what is likely to be the supremely interesting period of the war. Whether there will be so much for them after June or July it is hard to say at present. Anyhow, they can judge when the time comes whether it is worth while staying on much longer.

4. I saw Hill yesterday and he seems to have greatly enjoyed his time in India and to have made many friends. I am sure the more men of the right sort go out to make contacts on specific issues outside politics the better, so I shall look forward to the visit of your scientists and then to that of your industrial bigwigs. I hope that team is now getting together. I notice that Hill spoke very warmly of the ability of Ardeshir Dalal, whom you are thinking of for Member for Reconstruction.

5. In connection with reconstruction I am glad to see you have started an objective enquiry into population trends. I don't think our friends of the Bombay plan have really faced that problem at all. At present rates of progress their 15-year plan would not come to much in the way of raising the standard of living if meanwhile it has got to find employment for an extra 75 million people. It seems to me clear that there can be no development of industry, however rapid, that can keep pace with the present rate of increase, and the bulk of that increase must still go on to the land.

6. I see from Casey's letter of the 10th March,[3] of which you sent me a copy, that he would like to discontinue the practice of writing you a regular fortnightly letter. I hope you will resist this proposal and will draw his attention

to paragraph 5[4] of Zetland's despatch Reforms No. 3 of the 25th March 1937. Although some Governors are not quite as regular as they might be in this class of correspondence I imagine that you, like myself, set much more store on their letters as a source both of information and of expert comment on provincial affairs. Longer reports or letters on individual subjects, valuable though they may be as supplementary to the fortnightly letter, cannot be a satisfactory substitute for regular comment at reasonably short intervals on the more important Provincial developments of which otherwise we are apt to hear only through the Press. And Bengal, of all Provinces, is the one I should wish to be kept in closest touch with in these critical times.

[Para. 7, on land and revenue problems in the Eastern States Agency and co-operation between the Province of Orissa and the Orissa and Chhattisgarh States; para. 8, on Mr Amery's Easter holiday; and para. 9, on a memorial service for General Wingate, omitted.]

10. The Cabinet are being pushed along all the time towards a series of agreements with the United States, the whole aim and object of which is to try and set the Humpty Dumpty of 19th century economics, gold standard, Most Favoured Nation clause, &c., up on his wall again. I don't think in the end anything will come of it, for neither the Americans, still less other countries, are likely to agree. But meanwhile it paralyses all constructive economic policy in this country and in particular may have a disastrous effect on the Conservative Party, which will never forgive this Government if it has committed us to the abandonment of Empire Preference or to tying our hands against effective protection of our industries and our agriculture. Incidentally, it is making my own position in the present Government increasingly difficult. But there again we must wait and see how things develop.

[2] Dated 1 April. L/WS/1/582. [3] L/P&J/5/151.

[4] In this para. Lord Zetland explained that the main purpose of Governors' reports was 'to set out an account of the more important events and tendencies, political, administrative and economic, in the Province during the period covered by the report, with an expression of the Governor's personal views upon them. Such a report must of its nature be confidential. . . . The Governor's report itself must be a full and frank record of the Governor's personal opinions as well as of the facts to which those opinions relate.' L/P&J/9/297.

459

Mr Mudie (Bihar) to Sir E. Jenkins

L/P&J/8/513: ff 405–6

D.O. No. 285–GB. GOVERNOR'S CAMP, BIHAR, *14 April 1944*

My dear Jenkins,

I enclose a note on a conversation which I had yesterday with Chowdhury Khaliq-uz-Zaman, which may be of interest to H.E.

Yours sincerely,

R. F. MUDIE

Enclosure to No. 459

I had a talk yesterday for about an hour with Chowdhury Khaliquzzaman, the leading Muslim Leaguer in the U.P. and probably the cleverest person in the League after Jinnah. Till about 1935 or so Khaliq was a member of the Congress and has been prominent in politics for a great number of years.

I asked him about the co-operation between the Congress and the League in the recent Budget Session of the Assembly. He did not attach much importance to it and said that it would probably annoy Jinnah who is strongly opposed to any agreement with the Congress. I asked whether the attitude of the League was the result of H.E.V's reference to the "geographical unity" of India. He said that it was. Lord Linlithgow had first used the phrase, but vaguely, and the League attached little importance to it as it was used by a politician. But H.E.V. had said that the "geographical unity" could not be changed and also—presumably—H.E.V. is not a politician.

The reference to geographical unity was taken as a retrograde step after the admission in the Cripps offer of the right of minorities to self-determination. This apparently upset the League as what they are wanting is an advance on that offer. Khaliq's general thesis, which he has developed with me before, was that the Hindus had always in the end agreed to the Muslims' demands *after* the British Government had accepted them. The demand for separate electorates had been admitted by the British Government in 1909[1] and by the Hindus in 1916 (the Lucknow Pact,[2] I think). In the case of the Communal Award[3] the Congress had opposed the claim for 33⅓% Muslim representation in the Central Assembly and were talking of going up to 32%. But when the British Government awarded 33⅓% it was accepted, in fact, the Congress "neither rejecting nor accepting the award". The Cripps offer, however, introduced something new. The principle of Pakistan, according to Khaliq, was accepted but it made its application contingent on agreement with the Hindus. What the League would like now would be a declaration of Pakistan unqualified by the demand that the Hindus should agree to it. This would be

on the lines of the previous cases which he had referred to. If that was done, then he was sure that the Hindus would accept it. That is what Jinnah is playing for. He wants, in fact, to get Pakistan without giving a *quid pro quo* to the Hindus in order to come to an agreement with him. According to Khaliq, Rajagopalachariar had at one time agreed with Jinnah that Government should make an unequivocal announcement of their unconditional acceptance of Pakistan, Jinnah arguing that a plebiscite would be a waste of time and lead only to riots in the Punjab and Bengal. But later Rajagopalachariar changed his mind and at his recent discussions wanted Jinnah to accept the Cripps offer, i.e. Pakistan if the Hindus agreed and coupled with a preliminary "National Government" at the centre. This is the very thing that Jinnah wants to avoid. Khaliq is confident that in the end the Hindus must accept Pakistan and says that the Sikhs are very slowly coming round to that point of view.

Khaliq said that he was of the opinion that the British connexion must be retained for many years and that as soon as the British Government declared for Pakistan many other problems of great practical and administrative importance would be at once raised and the unreality of the present demand for immediate and unconditional independence exposed. I presume he meant that the Hindus would realise the importance and difficulty of defending Hindustan against the Muslims, whereas they are incapable of realising dangers that arise from factors outside India, from which, in any case, they assume that the British will protect them, as in the case of Ireland. He went on to develop his thesis that Pakistan would require capital for development and would prefer British to Hindu capital.

I asked about Punjab politics. He said that before Jinnah went to Lahore he (Khaliq) had advised him to go slow and Jinnah had agreed and had at first snubbed one of the younger Muslim hotheads who approached him. But as a result of increasing pressure and of a realisation of the great power exercised by Chhotu Ram, he had changed his policy. Apparently Jinnah is determined to break Chhotu Ram's power. Khaliq estimated that at the beginning the League would get the support of only about 30 Muslim M.L.As. who are at present supporters of the Unionist Party, but that in six months all Muslim M.L.As. in the Punjab would support the League.

[1] In the Indian Councils Act.

[2] An agreed plan of constitutional advance drawn up by nineteen Hindu and Muslim members of the Indian Legislative Council and ratified at Lucknow at the close of 1916. Amongst other provisions, the Pact made allowance on a generous scale for seats to be filled from separate Muslim electorates in both the Central and Provincial Legislative Councils.

[3] In a statement dated 4 August 1932, His Majesty's Government announced that, in the absence of any agreement between the Indian communities, it had itself decided how seats in the Provincial Legislatures were to be allocated among the communities under the proposed new Indian Constitution then under discussion by the Round Table Conference (Cmd. 4147). This allocation, known as the Communal Award, was, with some modification, to form the basis of the distribution of seats in Provincial Legislatures eventually laid down by the Government of India Act 1935.

He also mentioned Muslim colonization of waste land in Assam and said that he calculated that the Muslim percentage now in that Province was about 45 and that in a few years, if the present progress were maintained, Assam would be a Muslim majority Province. He had just been in Assam and said that the Muslims, according to Saadulla, were full of heart in spite of Japanese infiltration round Imphal.

460

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/662: ff 63–4

SECRET GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *14 April 1944*

No. 500

Dear Lord Wavell,

As I told Your Excellency a few days ago,[1] we are in for troublous times when Jinnah returns to the Punjab. He is expected to arrive in Lahore on the 18th or 19th of this month. He has given out that he proposes to insist on the "Unionist" Ministry changing their present appellation and branding themselves as a "Muslim League" Ministry.

Khizr is being assailed by increasing misgivings. To do him justice he has been through a rough time of late. Apart from the insidious and unscrupulous manœuvres of Jinnah, the death of Khizr's father and an increasing series of old-world condolence visits from all and sundry have been exercising a depressing effect on him. Also he has just had to undergo a minor operation. His health is never particularly robust and he is looking below par.

He has made it clear enough to me in a succession of long interviews that he is thinking seriously of giving way to Jinnah's demand. He says that the Unionist Party exists only in name, it has no funds and practically nothing in the way of organization, and its disappearance would cause little regret. He does not himself believe in Pakistan, but he thinks that the Pakistan slogan is bound to gain momentum and that it is likely to become a decisive factor in the next elections. Many of his Muslim supporters in the Assembly will, he considers, be driven into the Jinnah camp by apprehensions of what is to come. He puts the maximum number of immediate backsliders at 32, though he admits that this is a pessimistic forecast: (even this would leave the Unionists for the time being with a comfortable majority). He says that he has no liking for politics and intends to retire when the War is over: he would not mind taking risks for himself alone, but he does not like the idea of jeopardising his followers. He believes that there will be only two parties of any importance in India in

the near future—the Congress and the Muslim League: if he defies Jinnah and persuades his staunch adherents to adopt this course, he fears that in a comparatively short time they will all be relegated to political oblivion. He anticipates that the landlord class or "loyalists", as he often calls them, though in any case ultimately doomed, may be sacrificed before their time if he decides to hold out. Jinnah, he is convinced, will employ Maulvis and Mullahs to work up fanatical feeling and will not hesitate to revert to other still more nefarious methods of attack. Also Khizr keeps harping on his bitter experiences of what occurred after the last Great War when, as he says, those in the Punjab who had fought for the Empire found themselves ousted by traitors and non-co-operators while the British Government stood by and acquiesced. He suggests that I should solve the problem for him by giving him an "order" that he should stand up to Jinnah in the interests of the War Effort: he explains that he does not mean that I should give him anything in the nature of a formal order, but merely tell him that I consider it to be his duty as a loyal subject to act in the manner suggested.

I have told Khizr that I am not in a position to give him any kind of an order in this regard. I can only tell him as a friend what I would do in his place and it is my considered opinion that he will have no peace hereafter, nor will he be serving the interests of the Province or of India or of Muslims or of the Empire if he gives way to Jinnah and places himself in his power. A disruption of the Unionist Party even in name is bound, as I see it, to weaken the solidarity of the Punjab and to undermine the War Effort: the various communities will assuredly concentrate more and more in arraying themselves against each other instead of giving their attention to the War: Chhotu Ram and Baldev Singh will refuse to serve under a Muslim League Government and Khizr, who will become a slave to Jinnah's caprices, will lose face even with his own community.

I cannot deny that there is a good deal of force in Khizr's apprehensions, but the general opinion of all really responsible elements including Khizr's colleagues (with the exception of Shaukat who has gone so far as to threaten resignation) is that he must make his stand now or go under the wave. The prevailing opinion is that the number of Muslim M.L.As who are likely to secede from the Unionists at the moment, should Jinnah insist on forcing the issue, will not exceed 15. I think personally that it may rise above this number and that more will drift from time to time. And I must confess that, if Jinnah forces the issue as I believe he will do, I think the tranquillity of the Province is likely to be disturbed, whatever decision Khizr may take. All the same it seems to me that Khizr's right course is to abide by his former intentions and take a firm line and do his best to rally his forces.

Khizr is anxious that I should let you know the position and I have told him that I will do so. I should be most grateful if you could let me know not later

[1] No. 452.

than the date of Jinnah's expected arrival (the 18th instant) whether you would like me to give Khizr any advice other than what I have already offered him.

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

461

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir B. Glancy (Punjab)

L/P/&J/8/662: f 62

SECRET *15 April 1944*

D.O. No.-F. 90(5)-GG/42

My dear Glancy,

Many thanks for your letter No. 500[1] of 14th April 1944. I feared Khizar might weaken—politics are not his bread and butter, and he lacks the tenacity of the professional politician.

2. I agree that you cannot give him an "order", because the responsibility for advising you rests upon him, and you cannot force him to do anything against his own judgment. But I entirely agree with the line you have taken. It is of the greatest importance that until the end of the war against Japan there should be stable administration in the Punjab, and the dissolution of the Unionist Ministry and the substitution for it of a Muslim League Ministry, such as Jinnah wants, would be a disaster. I very much hope that Khizar will look at the matter from this point of view and do all he can to rally the Unionists. Also on a longer view, unless these influential country gentlemen with a big stake in their country stand up to the town-bred politicians, they will pay for it in the end. And if they do stand up for themselves firmly, I think they will find they have a greater influence and following than they think.

I have no objection to your telling him generally what I feel, if you think it would help. Give him my sympathy in his difficulties, and say that I hope to see the Punjab stand firm in its present wise policy. My own opinion must not go beyond Khizar, but if you see no objection I see none to your views as Governor being communicated by Khizar to his followers.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] No. 460.

462

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/P&J/8/513: ff 298–304

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *16 April 1944*

SECRET AND PERSONAL *Received: 1 May*

My dear Leo,

I mentioned in a recent letter[1] Twynam's appreciation of the Indian political situation. I now enclose a copy of it, with a copy of a much shorter paper of my own.[2]

I agree with Twynam's views on Congress tactics. Gandhi believes that if he sits tight we shall in the end give way or at least make a "gesture" acceptable to Hindu opinion. He will then be free to work the old cycle of agitation, conflict, suppression, and appeasement, which has done him so well in the past.

But I doubt if Twynam (paragraph 3) interprets fairly the reasons for which we have never used the Muslims as a "counterpoise to the Congress". It has been our policy to hold the ring for the Indian political parties, and I do not think we have ever intentionally allowed the strength or weakness of the Muslim League to influence us. I also doubt if, in his paragraph 6, Twynam estimates correctly the hold of the Congress on the country. In any backward country the number of persons actively interested in politics must be small, and the politicians are drawn from the better educated classes. The recent municipal elections in Bombay show that however unrepresentative the Congress candidates may be in theory, they do in practice still sweep the Hindu constituencies.

Twynam's solution is that we must at all costs avoid a policy of appeasement in dealing with the Congress, and should be in no hurry to move at all. When we do move, we should attempt to conciliate the Muslim League by accepting in some form the principle of self-determination, and our aim should be to secure the support not only of the League but of Rajagopalachariar and his followers. This comes rather near a recent and more crudely put suggestion by Jinnah that we should openly concede Pakistan. Jinnah professes to believe that if we do so the Hindus would take it lying down, and the whole Muslim community would be ready to co-operate.

My own paper can be read as a commentary on Twynam's conclusions. I am not in favour of immediate action. I believe that if we could establish a Centre Party with Muslim League support but without antagonising the Hindus, it might pave the way for further progress; but I doubt if we could begin by conceding Pakistan or anything like it in negotiations with Jinnah.

[1] No. 414, para. 2. [2] For Lord Wavell's paper see Enclosure to No. 507.

Jinnah understands well enough that the Cripps offer provides for self-determination and that this is one of the principles that holds good.

My paper does not, I admit, seem to carry us very much further, but I have other ideas revolving in my mind which I may be able to develop in the course of the next few weeks.

Yours

ARCHIE

Enclosure to No. 462

APPRECIATION OF THE INDIAN POLITICAL SITUATION, FEBRUARY 1944[3]

SECRET

All authorities agree that the predominant consideration with Congressmen at the moment is the release of those convicted, or detained as security prisoners, in connection with the disturbances which began in August 1942. The desire for release is strongest among the rank and file of Congressmen and is probably of less moment with members of the Working Committee than it is, for instance, with members of the A.I.C.C., while it probably weighs very little with Gandhi himself. Many of the delegates to the A.I.C.C. in August 1942, now imprisoned, show signs of weakening but the members of the Working Committee are made of sterner stuff and are inspired by the certainty that the halo of martyrdom will be secured to them, while their position as nominees of the President of the Congress makes it impossible for them to do other than follow the lead given by Gandhi who is, of course, the power behind the President. As for Gandhi himself, he will be reluctant to risk his prestige by opening negotiations which would imply defeat. He is therefore no doubt hoping for a turn of the wheel of fortune which will bring about a first move in the direction of appeasement from Government.

Not only is the Congress out for "all or nothing", to quote the words attributed to Sir Stafford Cripps,[4] but it has always acted on the principle of 'heads I win, tails you lose'. 'Heads I win', if the August 1942 disturbances had succeeded in their object, and 'tails you lose' if, as happened, they failed. In other words, the High Command, and/or Gandhi, have always manœuvred successfully so that the first overtures towards appeasement came from Government. This is what happened in 1934 when the civil disobedience movement of the years 1930–34 had petered out. On the pretext, which was raised before and will almost certainly be raised again, that no decision can be taken without a meeting of the A.I.C.C. and that therefore the release of members of the Working Committee and members of the A.I.C.C. is necessary before the civil disobedience movement can be called off, an attempt will surely be made to persuade Government to take the first step by releasing the Congress leaders.

It is instructive to consider Gandhi's political manœuvring to escape from the consequences of his own actions since the Congress passed under his domination in 1920. Throughout 1930 the Congress was engaged in defiance of the law of the land and the movement was only suspended in 1931 by virtue of an agreement[5] arrived at with Government, following which Gandhi went to London to take part in the Second Round Table Conference. In 1932 Congress embarked on the second civil disobedience movement which was crushed within a few months by preventive and punitive measures which were so successful that for a period of about two years Congress practically ceased to function. History has repeated itself on the same lines since the rebellion of August 1942 and there can be little doubt that Gandhi relies on extricating the Congress from its difficulties without permanent loss of prestige by the same methods which proved successful in 1934. The principal feature of those methods was to kindle a hope that the release of Congress prisoners would result in the adoption of a more reasonable and conciliatory attitude by Congress: it remains to be seen whether he can again win the trick by the production of this trump card. The situation differs from that which obtained in 1930–34 in respect of at least five factors:

(i) The August 1942 movement was much more of a rebellion than the civil disobedience movement of 1930–34 and it included the worst forms of sabotage at a time when enemy action was feared.
(ii) The country was thought to be in imminent danger of invasion in 1942.
(iii) The Congress has been more completely defeated than in 1934 and has certainly lost much of its hold over the masses which no longer believe in its promises of a millennium and are generally very prosperous as a result of war activities and inflated prices for agricultural produce.
(iv) No special reason for an immediate settlement exists now as in 1934 when the Constitution Act of 1935 was already on the anvil and it was important to win over the Congress to its acceptance.
(v) The real issue is not now one between Congress and Government but one between Congress and the Muslim League.

In short, it is Congress which is now in a slough from which it finds it difficult to extricate itself: it is Government which is on firm ground, since the Cripps offer, and it is the Congress which is bogged. Congress, and especially its present High Command, should be allowed time to digest the lesson that treason does not pay and some evidence that the lesson has been learnt should be forthcoming.

[3] [Note in original:] This note was printed two days before H.E. the Viceroy's address to the Central Legislature [see No. 399, note 1] which renders redundant much of the reasoning contained in paras. 1 and 2.

[4] See Vol. I, Nos. 637, note 1 and 665, page 816.

[5] The Gandhi–Irwin Pact.

It seems essential that, following the Cripps offer, which has in principle the approval of H.M.G., a different attitude of mind on the part of the Congress leaders should be insisted on before any overture for peace is made by Government. In short, they must be disabused of the "all or nothing" idea. It must be borne in mind that the Cripps offer envisages not only a settlement between the Congress and the Muslim League but also the negotiation of a treaty between H.M.G. and the proposed Constituent Assembly which will make provision for the safeguarding of Britain's interests as a world power and for a winding up of British control on terms which will be just and equitable. There is no indication whatsoever so far that the Congress is in a mood to make concessions either to the Muslim League or to the British Government. As Sir Firoz Khan Noon said to me on 17th January 1944 the chief concern of the Congress is severance from the British Commonwealth of Nations. Once negotiations are opened Congress, like the Egyptian nationalists, will in its present frame of mind inspired by Gandhi, oppose all proposals for treaty provisions essential to British interests and world security as incompatible with "Independence".

Two questions therefore arise:

firstly, whether any steps should be taken in the direction of a move towards "appeasement" of the Congress, and if so, when;
secondly, what is likely to be the method of approach best calculated to bring the Congress leaders round to a more helpful point of view.

2. As regards the first question, I suggested at the Governors' Conference that no move should be made for a period of six months after the assumption of office by the present Viceroy but this was subject to the two qualifications which I also mentioned that our policy can only be opportunist and that no move is possible so long as the resolution of the 8th August 1942 remains the official policy of the Congress Party.

It seems clear however that a state of deadlock all round cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. At the Conference, His Excellency the Viceroy expressed doubt whether the immediate post-war period may not prove more difficult than the period while hostilities still continue, and cited the example of Egypt as one which suggests the desirability of a political settlement before the end of the war.

On the other hand, there can be no doubt that Congress has manœuvred itself into a worse position, as a result of the August 1942 rebellion, than it has ever occupied in its previous history. Before the rebellion, it was necessary for Government to avoid by all possible means the threatened disturbances and therefore to adopt a conciliatory attitude towards the Congress. Now the boot is on the other leg and while there is no immediate urgency for Government to move, the Congress High Command must realise that every day that the

deadlock continues, a heavier strain is imposed upon the loyalty of their followers who remain incarcerated, either as convicts or as security prisoners. Also, for the reasons enumerated in my letter dated the 14th November 1943,[6] there is much to be said in favour of allowing Congress to "stew in its own juice", to quote the Prime Minister's trenchant phrase in another connection. Those reasons were:—

(i) We have pursued a policy of appeasement for 20 years without success;
(ii) the weakness of the Congress hold on the masses was demonstrated during the August 1942 disturbances when the Muslim-majority provinces remained almost wholly aloof while the masses were much less seriously affected than in 1930–32 in the Hindu-majority provinces, with the possible exception of Bihar; it can safely be said that the appeal of Congress to the masses is even less now than it was in August, 1942;
(iii) assumption of office by the Congress would add nothing to the war effort;
(iv) Gandhi and the Working Committee adhere to their lawless attitude and the nationalist press is full of malevolence towards Britain;
(v) the Congress will not be satisfied with anything less than an immediate so-called national government and this would inevitably precipitate a crisis with the Muslims.

The above reasons remain cogent but nevertheless the first qualification suggested above i.e. that our policy should remain opportunist, is only common-sense. The essential thing therefore seems to be that we should endeavour to manœuvre so that Congress intransigence must come down a peg or two.

A further factor is that, while Gandhi remains alive and a dominant personality in the Congress Party, nothing better than an implacable attitude towards Britain can be expected; his elimination from the political field would almost certainly improve the prospects of a reasonable settlement between Congress and Britain. On the other hand, his elimination might result in a swing over to the Hindu Mahasabha and the adoption of an even more intransigent attitude towards Muslim pretensions. On balance, it seems that the factor of Gandhi's demise must be dismissed as too uncertain—and the consequences as too incalculable—as a basis for policy. It follows that our calculations must be based on the assumption that Gandhi, with his implacable attitude towards Britain, must be reckoned with as a prime feature in the situation; therefore, nothing should be done which would add to his prestige, now undoubtedly diminished as a result of the bad leadership which inspired the August 1942 resolution which is well known to have been adopted, both by the Working Committee and the A.I.C.C., largely at the personal insistence of Gandhi himself. If Gandhi can manœuvre so that the first overtures for a settlement emanate from

[6] L/P&J/5/192: ff 31–2.

Government, his prestige will be largely restored and he will again be acclaimed as a leader who can be trusted to find a way out of the most difficult situation.

3. Given Gandhi's implacable attitude and the intransigence of Congress, the second question propounded in paragraph 1 arises for consideration. The Cripps proposals imply a recognition of the Muslim League claim to self-determination and it is unreasonable that Congress recalcitrance should act as a bar to progress in provinces which are not under the control of the Congress majority.

Hitherto, Government has hesitated about using the Muslims as a counterpoise to Congress. Its hesitation has been due largely perhaps to a feeling that the Muslims were ill-organised and too weak to make a front against the Congress. That was true of the situation before the Muslim League showed itself triumphantly representative of Muslim opinion. Since 1938, however, as Professor Coupland points out,[7] 73 Muslim members of the Central and Provincial Legislatures have been elected. Of these, 40 won their seats, independently of other parties, as Muslim Leaguers, and a further 12 in conjunction with the Unionist Party in the Punjab, as opposed to 6 seats won by Congress Muslims; 15 seats were won by Muslim "Independents". It is safe therefore to say that the Muslim League is predominant in the Muslim-majority provinces. This is a consideration which should not be overlooked when dealing with a triangular contest in which one of the parties refuses to play and, by so doing, hopes to disqualify the other two from taking part in the game. In short, it is suggested that some inclination of the ear to Muslim demands might prove the shortest way of bringing about a more reasonable frame of mind in the Congress High Command, and so paving the way towards ending the deadlock.

4. Item (*c*) of the Cripps offer[8] reads as follows:—

> "His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the constitution so framed subject only to—
>
> (i) the right of any province of British India which is not prepared to accept the new constitution to retain its present constitutional position, provision being made for its subsequent acceptance if it so decides;
>
> (ii) with such non-acceding provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree to [upon] a new constitution giving them the same full status as the Indian Union arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down."

It might well be desirable,[9] within the scope of this clause of the Cripps offer, to explore the possibility of arriving at some *modus vivendi* with the Muslim League which would secure for Government the unequivocal support of the Muslims not only for war measures but for a temporary settlement of the constitutional dispute, so far as they are concerned, until such time as the

Congress shows signs of being willing to play. Such exploration might include an enquiry into amendments of the Constitution Act which may be desired by the Legislatures of provinces where the constitution is functioning normally. In my letter dated the 24th June 1942[10] to Lord Linlithgow I referred to a visit which Sir Nazimuddin paid to me at Pachmarhi. I wrote:

> "His argument is that Gandhi, realising that His Majesty's Government are finally committed to the principle of self-determination for the Muslim areas, is determined to try to frighten them out of it. He promised that the Muslims will [would] have nothing to do with any movement set on foot by Gandhi except perhaps in Bengal where local politics may obscure the main issue."

That was written six weeks before the August rebellion which confirmed the truth of Sir Nazimuddin's forecast.

5. It is suggested that ultimately there will be no alternative but for H.M.G. to endorse and support the attitude adopted by Mr C. Rajagopalchari and set forth in his pamphlet *The Way Out*[11] published on 30th November 1943. In that pamphlet, the Muslim issue is dealt with in the following paragraphs which contain the gist of Mr Rajagopalachari's proposals:—

> "In the face of the demand made on behalf of the Muslim areas it is difficult to see how the principle of self-determination for such areas can be avoided in any plan for a free and independent constitution. Ruling out coercion, as we must, we cannot but consent to some plan by which the ascertained wish of the people in those areas must ultimately prevail. The method of ascertainment proposed in the Cripps plan is election on a broad franchise and the representatives so elected coming together with the fullest freedom of decision. The question of accession will be put to the vote of each Provincial Legislature. If the majority voting for accession is less than 60 per cent, the minority will have the right to demand a plebiscite of the adult male population of the province.
>
> The plan for expressing the self-determination of the inhabitants of any area can be modified or improved, but the principle has to be conceded. A fresh demarcation of provinces is not ruled out if objection be taken to the present delimitations. Contiguous districts in the north-west and east of India, wherein the Muslim population is an absolute majority, can easily be marked out. In the areas thus demarcated, a plebiscite held on the basis of adult suffrage or other practicable franchise should ultimately decide the issue of the

7 Professor R. Coupland, *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, Part III, *The Future of India* (London, Oxford University Press, 1943), p. 10.

8 Vol. I, No. 456.

9 Certain words have been overprinted here. A note in the margin reads: '[to give (ii) priority over (i) and]'.

10 Vol. II, No. 184.

11 See No. 334, note 11.

non-accession of such areas without prejudice to the right of any district contiguous to Hindustan to decide in favour of remaining in Hindustan."

6. If Mr Rajagopalachari and Mr Jinnah were brought together, it might be possible to frame a formula which would permit of an *ad interim* settlement with the League, and the kind of Congressmen with whom it is possible to do business. It is true that acceptance of Mr Rajagopalachari's policy would involve a final break with the Congress, so long as that organisation adheres to its present policy of "all or nothing", but it is suggested that this is an issue which must be squarely faced and that no other alternative presents itself which would not involve coercion of the Muslims. On the other hand, the Congress, formidable as it is in the press and on the platform, has feet of clay when looked at in terms of "power politics". This was sufficiently demonstrated during the August 1942 rebellion. The explanation probably lies in the fact that the Congress organisation mainly represents caste Hindus and almost entirely excludes not only the Scheduled Castes and aboriginal tribes but also those lower castes of Hindu society which, while not "Scheduled" in terms of the Government of India Act, represent the lower strata of Hindu society and include castes commonly known as Depressed Classes. An illustration of this is afforded by the Central Provinces which sent 25 delegates to the session of the A.I.C.C. which adopted the "rebellion" resolution of 8th August 1942. Those delegates included not a single member of the Scheduled Castes or aboriginal tribes, although these communities number some 7 millions in the Province, but included Brahmins, who number only about half a million, to the extent of 48 per cent; Banias, Jains and Marwaris, who number only a few hundred thousand, 20 per cent; Marathas and Kunbis, who represent the cultivating element, being represented only to the extent of 20 per cent.

7. In view of the intransigence of the Congress High Command, a more realistic policy should be adopted than the old policy of trying to be friendly all round. The Congress has passed its zenith as a political force: it has antagonised the Muslims and has failed to win the confidence of the Scheduled Castes. Many of the student class are attracted by Communism and the views of M. N. Roy. Any fresh accession of power to the Congress can only result from a mistaken policy by Government. It is impolitic, in the political situation which now obtains, for the Government of India, alien and unrepresentative as it is in an ultimate analysis, to antagonise all parties—which is what it is doing at present. It might have been sound policy when the Congress party was the only vital political force and it seemed essential to win it over, to court it only, but it leaves the Government not only without any support but without any clear aim when Congress is only one of two or more political parties.

The Government position would be clarified and a measure of support won, even from Congressmen, if Rajagopalachari were taken into the Government.

A still greater measure of support and a still clearer clarification of policy would be secured if, in association with Rajagopalachari, Jinnah were persuaded either to join the Government himself or to nominate a representative of the Muslim League. If Rajagopalachari and a Muslim League representative joined the Executive Council, they should obviously be allotted the portfolio of Constitutional Development, each holding a separate portfolio on behalf of his community. Such appointments would be a forceful indication of the Government of India's intention to follow up the proposals brought by Sir Stafford Cripps. It is true that Rajagopalachari's appointment might necessitate a more liberal policy towards Congress leaders in prison but such policy could be adopted with safety provided that the Government had shown its intention of standing on principles which are acceptable both to the Muslim League and Rajagopalachari. Instead of enjoying only the passive support of the vast numbers who will always acquiesce in the rule of those in power, the Government could then count on the active support of the powerful Muslim element, together with the support of many Congressmen who have hesitated to follow Rajagopalachari because such a line appeared to offer no prospects.

8. An understanding with the Muslim League would certainly strengthen Government's position in the Muslim-majority provinces and would be in accord with (*c*) (ii) of the Cripps offer. It could not reasonably be objected to by the Congress, if arrived at without consultation with that party assuming that the Congress has given no indication of willingness to make its peace with Government. It may be argued that any approach which did not commit Government to the principle of Pakistan would be unacceptable, but the short answer to that is that Pakistan has never been defined and the belief remains that it does not altogether exclude what Professor Coupland calls a "minimal centre".

If steps towards a settlement have to be taken with a Congress which remains obdurate, it seems only right that the opening move should be made after consultation, or an understanding, with the Muslim League which has done nothing to embarrass Government in the prosecution of the war.

9. Finally, it might be advisable to invite the Provincial Legislatures of those provinces, where the Constitution is functioning normally, to send delegates to a Constitutional Convention on lines similar to those suggested in the Cripps memorandum, but with an assurance that the Convention would be exploratory only, that there would be no decision by majorities and that the object would be to enable the Viceroy to advise himself. This step, however, could not be taken with advantage until a general election has taken place; the earliest imaginable date for that would be in the autumn of 1944 or winter of 1944–45.

10. In sum, there is nothing to be gained by opening negotiations with the Congress leaders while they are in their present frame of mind. Mrs Sarojini

Naidu's statement to press representatives on the 25th January 1944,[12] is represented by column writers such as "Candidus"[13] as containing the germ of a peace offer but it is so overloaded with threats and intransigence that it is clearly unacceptable—even if it contains the germ of a peace offer—and it contains no repudiation of the resolution of the 8th August 1942. On the other hand, it contains a wholly disingenuous exculpation of Gandhi and the Congress leaders for the disorders of August 1942, although a mass of evidence, recently sifted by Mr Wickenden,[14] clearly establishes Congress responsibility; as remarked by the Congress Socialist leader, Jaiprakash Narain,—what was it that Gandhi and his colleagues expected to happen when they were arrested after all their brave words about rebellion and every one being free to act as he wished? (Statement made by the Home Member to the National War Council on the 14th January 1944). Dr Khare remarked to me on the 21st January 1944, that the policy should be to release the Congress leaders but exclude them from power. I agree with the latter part of this advice and Dr Khare himself, in discussion, was compelled to admit that certain exceptions might have to be made to a policy of release even among members of the Congress Working Committee. A great many minor leaders could certainly be released after the expiry of 18 months or two years from the date of their incarceration as security prisoners.

11. In any event, pressure in Parliament and in India may eventually compel the Government to release most of the Congress detenus, if not those actually convicted of offences during the rebellion. Such releases would be effected far more safely if the Government had secured to itself the support of the Muslim League and persons who may accept Mr Rajagopalachari's leadership. In Bengal, for instance, since the introduction of the present constitution, it has been possible largely to ignore the antics of Congress partisans although Bengal contains a population which is 45 per cent Hindu. The issue being now primarily one between the Congress and the Muslim League, and not one between Congress and the British Government, as in former struggles, the proposals here suggested will be even more justifiable should Congress—as is likely—achieve victory at the polls in Hindu constituencies at the next general election. The more vociferous the Congress demands and the more intransigent their claims, the more essential it is that Government should have at its back the support of the Muslim League and Congressmen of the mentality of Mr Rajagopalachari.

12. The answers suggested to the two questions propounded are therefore as follows:—

(i) No further "appeasement" of the Congress should be attempted. Government has gone as far as is possible; to "appease" further would only lead to the whetting of the swords which have already been

sharpened. The first move should be left to the Congress; if it is not made, or is inadequate, the policy here suggested provides an alternative. It is suggested that the time for the initiation of such a policy might be soon after a Second Front has been successfully opened, when there remains no room for doubt as to an early successful outcome of the war.

(ii) The answer to the second question is that a firm stand should be taken on the principles of the Cripps offer and an attempt should be made to rally to the support of Government the Muslim League and Mr Rajagopalachari with all those who will be encouraged by his accession to office to support him openly. Once Gandhi understands that H.M.G. will not be frightened out of the principle of self-determination for the Muslim areas, a more realistic approach to the problem may be expected from the Congress.

[12] See No. 351. [13] In the *Times of India*. [14] See No. 392, note 2.

463

Government of India, Home Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 139

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *18 April 1944, 6.5 am*
Received: 18 April, 2 pm

4472. After Mrs Gandhi's death Bombay Government suggested transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar mainly as matter of convenience since party in Aga Khan's Palace would be reduced to very small number. Home Member was asked in Assembly on March 15th[1] whether Government intended to transfer Gandhi to some other place in view of fact that he had lost "two of his nearest and dearest life partners" in Aga Khan's Palace and replied that suggestion would be considered. Gandhi asked in letter of March 4th[2] to be transferred to ordinary jail ostensibly because he was horrified at expense of keeping him in Palace. Expense is considerable but this is minor consideration. Our lease of Palace expires end of April. Main question is whether there would be any advantage in transfer. Our original reasons for separating Gandhi from members of Working Committee were—

(*a*) to prevent consultation and possible attempts from jail to promote movement and

(*b*) to facilitate handling of fast by Gandhi. We do not think either of these dangers is now great but even if Gandhi were to stage another fast at Ahmednagar or fall so seriously ill as to necessitate admission of visitors he can be

[1] *The Legislative Assembly Debates*, vol. II, 1944, p. 1083. [2] See No. 430, note 19.

segregated there. We have rejected earlier requests from Gandhi to put him with the Working Committee but permanent transfer would be on different footing from interview for political purposes. After transfer which we should not keep secret Gandhi would have access to his colleagues and one excuse for inability to reconsider their position would be removed. It is doubtful whether any change of heart would result from transfer, though it might lead to further demand for meeting with All India Congress Committee. We could reject such demand and on the whole consider advantages of proposal outweigh disadvantages. Less trouble with Gandhi is to be anticipated than if we kept him in Palace with only two or three followers. We would send with him Miss Slade, Pyarelal (Secretary) and Miss Nayyar (Lady Doctor).

2. If proposal is accepted we would also consider whether there would now be any advantage in releasing any member of Working Committee since any release should take place before Gandhi joins the party. Health of Syed Mahmud has not been satisfactory and his views are not extreme. We are examining this question separately but would not consider release of any really important member.

464

Sir E. Jenkins to Mr Mudie (Bihar)

L/P&J/8/513: f 407

SECRET *18 April 1944*

D.O. No. F. 133–GG/43

My dear Mudie,

His Excellency asks me to thank you for the note of your discussions with Khaliquzzaman which you sent me with your letter of 14 April.[1] Jinnah does not seem to have read H.E.'s address to the legislature with much care; it reaffirmed the Cripps offer, and went on to express the hope that the political parties would realise that for many things India is a geographical unit. So there was no "retrograde step".

Yours sincerely,

E. M. JENKINS

[1] No. 459.

465

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *18 April 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 5th April.[1] The event of the week has been the disastrous explosion and fire at Bombay.[2] I have done my best to keep you informed about this, and after repeating one or two of Colville's telegrams, I arranged for them to be repeated to you directly from Bombay.[3] As His Majesty's Government's interest in the matter is mainly military, I asked Auchinleck to undertake, in consultation with War Transport Department, the despatch of official telegrams, and you will by now have had his first report.[4] The damage is serious, but might have been worse. Some sixteen ships were sunk or seriously damaged, and the Victoria Dock may be out of action for a long time. But the Prince's Dock is likely to be working again fairly soon, and it is most fortunate that the oil installations and the Alexandra Dock are practically unaffected. The loss of life and property is distressing, and the Bombay Government are pressing us for the earliest possible replacement of stocks of foodgrains which were burnt. The quantity so lost amounts to between 50,000 and 60,000 tons but a part of this may not be a total loss. From these stocks the Bombay Government were feeding not only Bombay City (for which they have eight weeks stocks separately in hand), but deficit districts such as Ratnagiri. The cause of the original explosion was a fire on a ship carrying cotton, timber and ammunition, but I have seen no report of how the fire began. Colville has suggested an enquiry by a High Court Judge, supported by technical assessors, and I am putting this to Auchinleck and Benthall. Benthall has been in Bombay for the last day or two, and has just returned.

2. I agree with what you say about India's needs in the first paragraph of your letter of 5th April. But it would be disastrous to infer that if India is compelled to limit her war effort, His Majesty's Government is entitled to refuse further help. I hope that Rowlands has succeeded in getting the Indian picture into perspective, though I am told he made no perceptible impression on the Cabinet Foodgrains Committee. My position about wheat for the Defence Services was that against their demand of 724,000 tons, India could from her own resources deliver 350,000 tons. With the imports so far promised by His Majesty's Government, we could have increased this latter figure to 550,000 tons. Unfortunately our position has again worsened owing to the

[1] No. 451. [2] On 14 April. [3] Copies of these tels. are on L/P&J/7/6607. [4] *Ibid.*

unseasonable weather of March and of the first week or so of April, and to the losses at Bombay. I am telegraphing to you again about this. It is clear that we cannot meet the demands of the defence services at all unless we get further imports. Surely His Majesty's Government must recognize that our food position is a matter not merely for His Majesty's Government but for the United Nations who are jointly committed to operations from India.

3. I am glad you found Casey's letter of the 11th March[5] interesting. His trouble about procurement is that, although he is certain that large quantities of paddy remain with the growers, the flow to the markets is relatively small. Paddy can, I am told, be buried and will keep for a couple of years. Casey will naturally acquire as much as he can, but the alternative to procurement on a voluntary basis is requisitioning, and this is a two-edged weapon. Casey is prepared to undertake requisitioning if he must, but it would probably be limited to selected large growers, and might make matters worse by frightening the smaller ones. The business is by no means as simple as it looks from your end, and Casey is well aware of this. I gave you my general views on the Bengal situation in my short letter of 12th April.[6]

One point which Casey made was that the "Grow More Food" campaign has not done anything like what is sometimes claimed for it, and that the large rice harvest of last winter was due to natural causes and high prices. I am not sure that Provincial Governments have used to the full some of the simpler ways of stimulating food production. They have gone in for small irrigation schemes and propaganda, and an impressive area formerly under short staple cotton is now growing millets and other foodgrains. But a lot can be done in individual districts to improve the distribution of good seed and to see that the villagers really understand the importance of growing more food, and I am not satisfied that sufficient attention has been devoted to routine methods of this kind. I am writing to Governors asking them to maintain the pressure and to keep me informed.

It is a pity that the Army have had to withdraw many of their Medical Officers from Bengal. But Casey and I agree that the withdrawal is necessary, and that Bengal can carry on. The number of inoculations and vaccinations performed during recent months has been very large, and for the time being, at least, we seem to be on top of the epidemics.

4. I do not agree with the classification of the Provinces by Inglis to which you refer in your paragraph 6. I should say that the limpest provinces are Assam, Bengal and Orissa; and that Bihar is not too good. The other provinces are in good shape, and I have been impressed by the hold Hallett has on the U.P., and by the keenness of the civil administration there. I know nothing about the details of the working of the railways, and possibly railway discipline in the U.P. may have impressed Inglis unfavourably.

5. There has been no special progress with planning and development. The Bombay planners are to meet Srivastava here on the 29th April for an informal discussion of general principles. Srivastava was very keen on a meeting, and though Raisman and Gregory thought it might not be a great success, I let Srivastava have his way. I intend to take the opportunity of seeing Ardeshir Dalal—I have met the other Bombay planners, with one or two exceptions.

6. I agree that Iven Mackay has made a good start, but he will not have a great deal to do here. We have had some difficulty in housing him properly, and I am trying to get him a more comfortable house and a good office. He is at present in a house belonging to Nabha in Old Delhi, which though reasonably good, does not give him enough space for putting people up or for entertaining. Shanmukham Chetty declined the Australian appointment, and I consulted Casey about one of his Ministers, Shahabuddin, whom he thought possible. Casey has replied that Shahabuddin, though possible, would not be an ideal choice, and has suggested Burdwan. I very much doubt if Burdwan would take the appointment, but I have asked Khare for his views on his suitability.

7. Khare's telegrams on the South African problem have been welcomed by Shafa'at Ahmad Khan who has reported on an interview with Forsyth, the External Affairs Secretary in the Union Government. It seems that Forsyth at once got into touch with Smuts, and in Shafa'at Ahmad Khan's opinion there is some hope of a settlement. The solution suggested is the establishment of a Licensing Board of five, including two Indians, with an official appellate authority. If a Board of this kind were established, I presume the Pegging Act[7] would be repealed or suspended, and applications from Indians to acquire property or build would be dealt with on their merits. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan seems to have noted his instructions to refrain from any action likely to give the Union Government the impression that we are instigating the Indian community to hold out for impossible terms, for he says in his report to Khare that he has made it clear to the Natal Indian Congress that the Government of India will acquiesce in any arrangement arrived at between representatives of the Indian and European communities in Natal on the segregation issue. I am very grateful to you for agreeing to take Shafa'at Ahmad Khan off my hands, and am asking Khare whether he has any objection to my making the offer. Unfortunately Khare is at the moment on tour, and is, I think, somewhere in Madras. It therefore takes several days to get a reply from him to any letter, and even telegrams are slow.

Since this paragraph was dictated I have heard from Smuts that agreement has been reached between the Union Government and the Natal Indian Congress. Legislation is to be introduced into the Natal Provincial Council

[5] See No. 430, note 7. [6] No. 457. [7] See No. 82, note 6.

for the establishment of a Joint Board of five (two Europeans, two Indians, and a European Chairman) whose functions it will be to license the occupation of dwellings in borough and town areas in Natal. When the new law comes into force the application of the Pegging Act to Durban will be withdrawn by proclamation. I have repeated Smuts' telegram[8] to you and have thanked him. I hope this solution will work, and improve our relations with the Union.

[Para. 8, on Sir Hassan Suhrawardy, omitted.]

9. There are no political developments of any importance. Sapru and the other "Non-Party Leaders" seem incapable of thinking beyond the release of the Congress leaders and the formation of a National Government. Why anybody should suppose that the release of the leaders would in itself produce an improvement, or that Jinnah would immediately rush to join the National Government, I do not know.

Jinnah, after failing in his first attempt to break up the Unionist Party in the Punjab, is determined to try again, and although the Hindu newspapers are confident that he will not succeed, and the official fortnightly reports of the Punjab Government seem equally confident, Glancy has let me know in a personal letter[9] that Khizar is despondent and feels that he is fighting a losing battle. Like many of the wealthy landowners in India, Khizar lacks tenacity as a politician. He feels that the British are inclined to let their friends down, and that if he stands out against the Muslim League now, he will only get a worse time in the future. He is, however, most anxious to do nothing to impede the war effort, and Glancy and I are encouraging him to hold on on the ground that it is vital to maintain a stable Government in the Punjab until Japan is defeated. I hope that he may be able to get through, but it is possible that if Jinnah persists, some of Khizar's followers will desert him and the Unionist Government may be defeated. It is difficult to say what would happen then: there might be a period of political chaos, as a Muslim League Government would be bitterly opposed by Chhotu Ram and influential rural Hindu element, and probably some of the Muslims.

M. N. Roy has, I believe, telegraphed to England an "open letter" to Members of Parliament. There is not much in this letter—he takes his usual point that the old parties and politicians are useless, and that what India needs is a provisional Government of new men committed to winning the war and to laying down the principles of a new democratic constitution.

Gandhi has sent me an ill-tempered letter[10] in reply to mine.[11] I am sending you a copy, and am not continuing the correspondence.

10. You will have had my private telegram[12] about my talks with Goonetilleke and Lockwood. Lockwood spoke to me convincingly about the need for additional Indian labour to increase the production of rubber in Ceylon, and for more Indian rice. The labour question is a difficult one, and is likely to be

matter of prestige between my colleagues (especially Khare) and the Ceylon Government. On the supply of rice to Ceylon you know my views. We cannot, in existing conditions, let rice go out of India without immediate compensatory imports of wheat. I will do what I can on both matters.

11. In the letter of December 9th, 1943,[13] you mentioned that at a recent meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions a point was raised whether compulsory borrowing could not be used more extensively as an anti-inflationary instrument. I am afraid I have been slow in answering, but Raisman had to deal with the Budget before expressing a final opinion. I enclose in this bag a copy of a note[14] given me by him with which I agree.

12. I hear that Rowlands is expected back on the 20th or 21st April, and shall be interested to hear his account of what is going on in London.

13. The N.D.C. is in session. So far we have had a quiet time; the Food Department had quite a lot of bouquets thrown at it for its efforts at control, but it was all on the assumption that adequate imports of food would be forthcoming, and there was not one single speaker who did not emphasise the necessity of this.

[8] 80 of 18 April. L/P&J/8/301. [9] No. 460. [10] No. 455. [11] No. 445.
[12] 760–S of 14 April. L/PO/10/18. [13] No. 260. [14] L/F/7/566.

466

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *19 April 1944, 10.15 pm*
SECRET *Received: 19 April, 11.30 pm*

No. 805–S. When shall I get further decision on food imports? We have had in March and early April quite unprecedented rain with thunderstorms and hail over large part of India. Estimates of damage can only be approximate but on best information at present available following modifications are needed in wheat figures given in my No. 459–S[1] of 4th March and No. 628–S[2] of 25th March. All figures in thousand tons.

2. *Procurement.*—Estimate in my No. 628-S, 900. United Provinces have suspended 20 from current crop quota and cancelled 100 from new crop quota. Punjab have cancelled 100 for improvement over original declared surplus on

[1] No. 408. [2] No. 440.

which we were counting. Reports from Punjab States, Central India[3] and Rajputana are incomplete but reduction not likely to be less than 30. Total reduction from surplus areas due to unseasonable weather, 250. Revised estimate for procurement, 650.

3. *Requirements.*—Damage to barley, gram and millets cancels 150 estimated in paragraph 7 of my No. 459–S. Central Provinces report additional deficit of 73. Ajmer-Merwara requires additional 5 and Madras 25 to compensate loss of *jowar*. Total worsening 253 or, say, 250. Civil requirements for deficit areas thus increased from 550 to 800. This does not (repeat not) allow for deterioration which has been reported in Bombay Presidency, for which accurate figures not yet available.

4. We are thus worse off by 500 than when last estimate was made and minimum civil requirements now exceed procurement by 150. We have in addition to replace stocks lost in Bombay fire amounting approximately to 50.

5. Promised import of 200 just balances civil position with nothing (repeat nothing) to meet defence requirements of 724 for 12 months from 1st May and whole of this amount must be imported if Army demands are to be met.

6. Casey is doing all he can in Bengal but only about 270 rice and paddy so far procured against his reduced target of 600. If he holds situation and prevents famine in Bengal he will be doing all we can expect. I have helped Ceylon with emergency loan 5 rice.

7. I am clear we now need 724 tons wheat in addition to 200 promised if civil population and Army are to be fed. Matter is not one for His Majesty's Government alone as United Nations are deeply involved in operations here. I must press once more for urgent decision in consultation with Americans.

8. There is growing state of nervousness in India about food position due to knowledge of slow procurement in Bengal, Bombay disaster and especially reports of insufficient imports. As I have repeatedly warned you success of our procurement and controls depend entirely on public confidence. Only method of restoring and maintaining confidence is to announce that imports sufficient to cover calculated deficit have been arranged. Food Department point out that our demands are well within estimate of Foodgrains Policy Committee which they have consistently supported since last July and correctness of which has been borne out by events. Government of India having accepted Committee's recommendations are under constant pressure to disclose import position.

9. I am informing Supreme Commander and Commander-in-Chief of inability of India to meet Service requirements.

[3] 'Punjab States, Central India' deciphered as 'States of Central India'.

467

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/P&S/13/981: ff 164–8

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *20 April 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET
D.O. No. F. 681(2)–GG/43
My dear Leo,
In my private telegram No. 2702–S[1] of December 11th 1943, I promised to let you have, early in the new year, some ideas on the subject of the Indian States. I am afraid I have been too busy to give much attention to this very important and complex element in the Indian situation; but I feel it is time that I sent you something of my feelings on the subject.

2. It is perfectly clear to me that at some time both we and the Indian Princes have got to face the realities of the position and have a frank discussion of them, as our solemn commitment to give self-government to British India as early as possible is really not compatible with our equally solemn commitments to the 582 Indian States to preserve them in their present form. This could only be done at the last resort by economic sanctions or force of arms; and I cannot see a British Government which has granted self-government to British India applying either sanctions or force to preserve the Indian States intact. The alternative is to assist the Indian States by advice and in every practical way possible, to come into the Indian Constitutional Federation, in whatever form it takes, to the best advantage for themselves. This, I feel, is what we shall have to do eventually; though the time to do so is not yet.

3. In the meantime, Wylie has brought to my notice how deeply committed we are to the Indian Princes, by Queen Victoria's Proclamation of 1858,[2] by King George the Fifth's Proclamations of 1914[3] and 1921,[4] as well as the Canning Sanads, and the innumerable assurances given to the Princes by successive Viceroys. We shall obviously be sooner or later in a thoroughly unenviable position by the need for reconciling our past promises with present-day realities. I am afraid that this is a position in which the British Government has found itself before, and, I imagine, many other governments. One certain thing is that we should avoid as far as possible committing ourselves any further in this matter with promises we are unlikely to be able to fulfil.

[1] See No. 265 and its note 1. [2] H. of C. 1859 Session 1 XVIII 110, p. 283.
[3] Cd. 7624. *Papers relating to the support offered by the Princes and Peoples of India to His Majesty in connection with the War*, No. 1, p. 3.
[4] On the inauguration of the Chamber of Princes. Published in *The Times*, 8 February 1921. Also on L/P&S/10/916: f 38.

4. There is the question whether the Indian States could possibly form a separate Union of their own, if a settlement with British India was made on the lines of the Cripps offer. I am quite clear that the geographical position, apart from the many other considerations, makes this impossible, and Linlithgow shared this view (see his telegram No. 2591–P[5] of August 25th 1942). That you were of the same opinion is clear from paragraph 3 of your Private and Personal telegram No. 1391[6] dated November 28th 1942.

Generalisations about the Indian States are, as you are aware, quite misleading, but the figures supplied by the Political Department which I attach to this letter give some rather striking facts. You will see that some 60 per cent of the entire population and of the total revenue of the Indian States comes from the 13 largest States; and that 561 States have an average population of only 50,000 people and an average revenue of Rs.2.7 lakhs. It is obvious that a Federation of 582 States, of which 561 were of such petty size, could never work.

5. My general conclusion is therefore that the only possible way out of the present impasse is that the Indian States should somehow or other be accommodated in the Indian Union of the future, if such a union is ever realised; and that at the proper time we must bend all our efforts to the achievement of this purpose, and in the meantime avoid every commitment to the contrary.

6. By what means the Indian States are to be brought into an Indian Union, I am not at present prepared to say. Some of the larger ones may obviously stand by themselves as provinces or units of an Indian Federation; others may possibly group themselves to form similar units; but I believe that the greater part of the petty States are doomed to be absorbed into the administrative machinery of some province or unit of the new India. I feel that all we can do for the majority of these petty States is to try and secure for them as much as possible of their privileges and pomps, in fact that they should be let down as lightly as possible.

7. This being the general picture that I have formed in my mind, the immediate problem is the course of action to be taken at present. There is no doubt that I shall be seriously tackled by the Princes in the near future as to our intentions, and shall be pressed to give some reaffirmation of our pledges to them. I have no doubt that the shrewder of the Princes are perfectly aware of the realities of the situation, and in many ways I should prefer to discuss the position with them with perfect frankness. But I am sure that this is not advisable at present. The attachment scheme in the Western States has stirred the deeps of our whole position in relation to the Indian States, a great deal more than the merits of the plan really justify; and I do not think we should agitate their minds any further at present about the constitutional issue. On the other hand I agree with what you say in the last paragraph of your letter of January 21st,[7] that it is likely to

come to a point when it is difficult to avoid some public reaffirmation of our pledges or at any rate the denial of any intention to repudiate them. I think we should in no circumstances go farther than the formula employed in our letter of January 4th 1943[8] to the Pro-Chancellor, that the Indian Princes may rest assured that the fulfilment of the fundamental obligations arising out of their Treaties and Sanads remains an integral part of His Majesty's policy. We can hardly say less than this if we are pressed, but I would not say even this unless it became necessary; and we must certainly avoid any suggestion that the States can set up an inclusive union of their own, or that every existing Indian State can retain a separate existence in a Union of All-India.

8. I should be glad if you would let me know whether you agree generally with these conclusions, as I feel that I shall before long have to face a deputation of the Princes on the matter.

9. Does the disappearance of the innumerable petty States into which Germany was split 150 years or so ago provide any guide on our problem? What became of all these petty German princelings and their courts and their privileges and their pomps and their armed forces and their pedigrees and all? I believe the Almanac de Gotha is still published, but have they left any other trace? The larger ones—Bavaria, Saxony, Wurtemburg, Hanover still have something of their old rights, haven't they? But the little fellows, how many were there and what happened to them?

(Since writing above, I have learnt that my Political Department are in correspondence with the India Office about the German States).[9]

Yours,

ARCHIE

[5] Vol. II, No. 629. [6] Vol. III, No. 226. [7] No. 338.

[8] See Vol. III, No. 309, note 4.

[9] Arising from a suggestion made by Sir A. Lothian in correspondence with Sir F. Wylie the latter, in a letter dated 22 December 1943, had asked Mr Patrick if the India Office would prepare a note on the mediatisation of the German States since the Government of India's Political Department did not have the relevant reference books. Mr Patrick sent Sir F. Wylie a note prepared by Mr Lumby under cover of a letter dated 6 May 1944 in which he concluded that the chief value of the note was in showing 'how extremely chimerical is the hope of deriving any profitable lessons from historical analogies, so far as concerns our planning for the general constitutional future of India.' The note was seen by Mr Amery. In his reply dated 27 June Sir F. Wylie reported that he had shown the note to Lord Wavell and that the latter's comment was 'that the course of events followed in Germany is pertinent to our own problem only as showing that small weak States cannot survive permanently.' For Wylie's correspondence with Lothian see L/P&S/13/980; for correspondence and comments on the India Office note see L/P&J/7/6373.

Enclosure to No. 467

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	No. of States.	Total population in lakhs.	Percentage of col. 2 on total population of Indian States.	Total income in lakhs.	Percentage of col. 4 on total revenue of all Indian States.	Average population of each State in lakhs.	Average income of each State in lakhs.
				Rs.			Rs.
A.—States with an annual income of Rs. 1 crore and above.	13	529	58·2	3,262	61·1	40·7	251
B.—States with an annual income of over Rs. 50 lakhs but less than Rs. 1 crore.	8	54	5·9	558	10·5	6·7	69·8
C.—States with an annual income of less than Rs. 50 lakhs.	561	326	35·9	1,516	28·4	·58	2·7
Total	582	909		5,336			

468

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *20 April 1944*
Received: 3 May

Your telegram[1] saying that the food situation has worsened so much that you can supply nothing to the military has come as a great shock. I had been planning to bring the whole question of India's capacity up next week together with the reports of the Principal Administrative Officers via the Chiefs of Staff, and this will of course make my report far worse. It is just possible, however, that it may bring the seriousness of the position home to the Cabinet. I can say no more at present.

2. Rowlands has just left, I believe, after doing a lot of useful work bringing the acuteness of the Indian food and general economic situation home to Ministers and others. It was well worth while having him back.

3. There was a breeze in the House the other night[2] which no doubt was telegraphed out to India in the usual distorted form. In commending the necessity of continuing Section 93, I thought it necessary to remind the House that it was not our doing but Congress intransigence which brought it about. I thought I was saying nothing that could be disagreed with by any except the little knot of extreme pro-Congress Members like Sorensen, but to my great surprise mild old Pethick-Lawrence jumped up and denounced me for being provocative and wholly unfit to hold my office. I have never been so surprised since the occasion when I was once attacked by a sheep. However, it all ended amicably, and I got the Resolutions through in not much more than half an hour.

4. In that connection I am just now sending you a telegram[3] reluctantly acquiescing in the postponement of elections for the Central Assembly. All the same, I have sometimes wondered whether the time is not coming, though it may not have come yet, for holding elections even during the war. If things go well the stock of the Congress leaders will be very much down and the stock of moderate men relatively stand higher and the results of an election be better than if postponed till after the war and when the Congress leaders have had plenty of time in which to work up a new agitation. If such an election were held, I suppose we could hardly avoid letting them out for it, though every other country would think it quite natural to keep them shut up, and we here I imagine would not necessarily release Oswald Mosley for election purposes. I see no reason why they should not be detained until very near the actual date and so give them the minimum time in which to organise. I certainly have long ago come to the conclusion that I hope for the Republicans to win the American election and find themselves in the shafts of war realities and compelled to carry on rather than upset everything done before them. Similarly, I am by no means sure that if there is to be an election here on the collapse of Germany it would not be a good thing to have a Labour Government rather than an irresponsible Labour opposition coming into power a few years later on a general policy reversing everything.

[Para. 5, on Basic English, omitted.]

6. The Press here, or some of them, have been very tiresome, suggesting lack of co-operation and disagreement between Auchinleck and Mountbatten, as well as making an undue fuss over censorship. Joubert is trying to straighten

[1] No. 466. [2] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 399, 18 April 1944, cols. 155–66.
[3] 368 of 21 April. L/P&J/7/5954.

the matter out at a meeting of the Press tomorrow, and I have arranged for Joyce to be there as well to look after the Government of India side of the business. I had to stave off a lot of questions on the subject this morning.[4]

[Para. 7, on the memorial service for General Wingate, omitted.]

4 *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 399, cols. 351–2.

469

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/662: ff 36–7

SECRET GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *21 April 1944*

No. 502

Dear Lord Wavell,

Many thanks for Your Excellency's secret demi-official letter No. F 90(5)–GG/42[1] of the 15th of April about Jinnah's visit. I have given Khizar your message for which he asks me to thank you, and I have told him the gist of what you have said and asked him to keep it to himself, which he assures me that he will do. Jinnah arrived here two days ago and was met by a crowd of a few thousands at the Railway Station; there was considerably more organisation about his reception than on the last occasion, and there were shouts of "Qaid-i-Azam zindabad"[2] and "Chhotu Ram murda-bad",[3] but no serious unruliness. Since his arrival Jinnah and his adherents have been strenuously carrying on their campaign and doing all they can to break down opposition by means of a war of nerves. One of the most prominent organisers of this has been Shaukat and it seems fairly plain that his retention in the Cabinet has very little to commend it if Khizar survives the attack, as I hope he will do. Attempts have been made by the Unionists to get signatures from Muslim M.L.As to the effect that they will resign from the Muslim League if Jinnah forces the issue and insists on the name "Unionist" being dropped; the latest information given to me is that about 22 such signatures have been taken, but it is doubtful whether in any case they will all be effective, since some of those concerned are suspected to have promised allegiance to the other side as well. Khizar is still feeling uncertain and very unhappy, but he had his first meeting with Jinnah yesterday evening, which lasted for about 2½ hours and appears to have had something of a bracing effect on him. Jinnah spent most of the time in lecturing and indulged in a series of wild misrepresentations about Chhotu Ram and Sikander and various others. He admitted after a prolonged wrangle that he had told Khizar in Delhi that he had no objection to the name "Unionist" being retained, but his attitude is

that the situation has now altered. He said that no man could constitutionally belong to two parties and he gave a disquisition on English history in support of this contention. He argued therefore that for a Muslim to adhere to the Unionist Party as well as to the Muslim League was like keeping a mistress in addition to a wife. To this Khizar adroitly responded that being a Muslim himself he was entitled to have two wives, if he wished to do so. Khizar is to have another meeting with Jinnah this evening and the result may be clearer by then, though discussions may go on for some days. There is a general consensus of opinion that Jinnah is determined to carry matters to extremes.

There has been considerable comment here, both among Muslims and non-Muslims, about a speech which, according to the Press, was delivered recently by Sir Aziz-ul-Haque at the recent All-India Muslim Educational Conference. In this he appears to have spoken strongly in favour of Pakistan and to have been trying to counteract the wholesome advice which Your Excellency gave in your speech to the Legislatures.[4] It is said that Sir Aziz-ul-Haque is arranging for a supply of paper for an extra Muslim periodical in the Punjab in order to support the extreme policy of the League and that to camouflage this his idea is to arrange for two extra Hindu periodicals, one in Bengal and one in Madras. I do not know how far this is true, but Sir Aziz-ul-Haque has certainly not on this occasion been helpful towards the preservation of stable Government.

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

[1] No. 461. [2] 'Long live Qaid-i-Azam'. [3] 'Death to Chhotu Ram'.
[4] See No. 399, note 1.

470

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 216

L/E/8/3323: ff 184–6

Shipment of Foodgrains to India

MEMORANDUM BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *21 April 1944*

1. The Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements met on the 6th April[1] and considered telegram No. 628[2] of the 25th March from the Viceroy, a copy of which is annexed as Appendix I. Sir Archibald Rowlands, adviser to the Viceroy on War Administration, reported orally to the Committee Lord Wavell's view that, failing the imports he asked for, the risk of breakdown was so serious and its effects would be so widely felt that, in his opinion, the

[1] No. 453. [2] No. 440.

Government of the United States should be associated with His Majesty's Government if India's requests had to be rejected. Refusal meant not merely a shortage for the Army, but grave risk of a failure of procurement both at the Centre and in the Provinces, with a recurrence of last year's disasters and failure of India as a base.

2. The Minister of War Transport made it clear that no shipping could be found for the transport of foodgrains to India beyond the present programme except by cutting operational needs.

3. The Secretary of State for War pointed out that the Viceroy was constitutionally subject to direction by the Secretary of State for India, and that in the last resort it would be for His Majesty's Government to decide whether the available supplies in India were to be applied to the Defence Forces or the civil population.

4. After discussion, the conclusion was reached that three possible courses are open:—

(*a*) that the Viceroy should be instructed that the Government of India must find from Indian sources the wheat required for the military demand even at the expense of the essential needs of the civil population in India. It was recognised that this course might have serious political and economic repercussions and might seriously jeopardise India's economic stability as a base for operations;

(*b*) that the shipping required to carry the additional wheat imports requested by the Viceroy should be supplied by His Majesty's Government, though the Committee were agreed that this could only be done at the expense of some operational programme;

(*c*) that a request for assistance should be made to the Americans.

The Committee felt that they could not make any recommendation to the War Cabinet and agreed that the choice between these alternatives could only be taken by the War Cabinet.

5. I have now received from the Viceroy the two telegrams annexed as Appendices II[3] and III.[4] These show that owing to damage to the spring crops from bad weather there has been a serious worsening of the situation. So far as the estimates of damage can be converted into actual figures of grain, the estimates show a deficiency of about 10 per cent. from the normal. That means that instead of nearly 25 million tons of grain from the spring crops we cannot look for much more than 22½ million tons. In the present food situation in India this is a serious position.

6. The expectation is that the producing provinces will not be able to spare more than 650,000 tons this year as against the 900,000 tons anticipated in the

Viceroy's telegram of the 25th March, a copy of which is appended for convenience of reference. Moreover, losses of barley, gram and millet have destroyed the expectation that surpluses of these grains could be used as substitutes to fill the requirements of the deficit provinces to an amount of 150,000 tons. Other increased requirements bring the total needed for the deficit provinces to 250,000 tons. Civil requirements for the deficit areas are thus increased from 550,000 to 800,000 and there are 50,000 tons destroyed in the Bombay fire to be replaced. The result is thus a net worsening of 550,000 tons and the Viceroy now, in addition to the 200,000 tons promised, requires not 174,000 tons of wheat but 724,000 tons of wheat if the minimum needs of the civil population are to be met and the army are also to receive their requirements.

7. The estimated requirements and supplies of wheat available for the next twelve months as put forward on 25th March and as now revised are as in the Table below. The figures of requirements make no provision for the reserves which are most desirable to support procurement and price control:—

	Estimate on 25th March (*Thousands of tons.*)		*Estimate on 19th April* (*Thousands of tons.*)	
1. *Requirements.*				
Military needs	724		724	
Civil needs (deficit areas)	550		800	
Replacement of Bombay losses ...			50	
	——	1,274	——	1,574
2. *Supplies available.*				
Estimated procurement from surplus areas	900		650	
Imports promised by His Majesty's Government	200		200	
Wheat available		1,100		850
Deficit		174		724

8. In my view and that of my colleagues on the Sub-Committee[5] the Viceroy's further telegrams do not affect our conclusion as reported in

[3] Tel. 805–S of 19 April; No. 466.

[4] Tel. 4534 of 19 April from G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S., summarising the reports so far received of damage to crops by recent weather. L/E/8/3323: f 197.

[5] It is evident from Mr Turnbull's notes on the file that Mr Amery wrote to the other three members of the Committee enclosing a draft of this memorandum and asking for their concurrence in the view expressed in para. 8. Mr Amery's letters are not on the file which contains only Lord Cherwell's reply (No. 471).

paragraph 4 above. I submit, however, that the damage to the crops now reported greatly increases the dangers of the situation and that the position is too serious to be left where it is.

L. S. A.

471

Lord Cherwell to Mr Amery

L/E/8/3323: f 174

GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W. 1, *21 April 1944*

Dear Amery,

I agree[1] that no more can be done by the Sub-committee and that the matter must now be referred to the Cabinet.

I should, however, have liked to see a reference in your report to the possibility of inducing the hoarders to disgorge by strong action against the small clique who appear to specialise in profiteering. The following quotation from a lecture delivered to the East India Association[2] by Mr. P. J. Griffiths, a member of the Indian Legislative Assembly, seems to indicate that Grigg is not alone in holding the view that action of this sort might be effective—

> "Food offences in India have hardly ever received adequate sentences. . . . The Central Government and the Provincial Government have been warned again and again—particularly by various British members of the Legislatures in India—that the weakness of the courts was making the law a laughing-stock and bringing Government into disrepute. Up to when I left India a few weeks ago the warnings had produced no adequate results and the sentences which were being inflicted on offenders were continuing to make a mockery of the law." (*Asiatic Review* April 1944.)[3]

Yours sincerely,

CHERWELL

[1] Mr Turnbull noted on the file: 'This is in reply to a letter enclosing copy of the memo. asking if Lord C. agreed that the new telegrams do not affect the position as concluded by the C[ommi]ttee.'

[2] On 15 February 1944. [3] pp. 121–7 at p. 124.

472

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/WS/1/654: ff 204–5

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *21 April 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: P. 16/44

Prime Minister

I have just circulated to the Cabinet, which might consider it on Monday the 24th April, if you think fit, a report[1] of the Sub-Committee on India's food-grain requirements. The Committee reached the conclusion that in relation to the Viceroy's demand for a further 200,000 tons of wheat during the third and fourth quarters of the year, there were three possible courses, viz.—

(*a*) to reject the demand at the risk of grave economic disaster in India which would inevitably affect the success of whatever operations are contemplated from India;
(*b*) to meet the demand though at the cost of diverting the shipping involved by it from one or other operational requirement elsewhere; and
(*c*) to appeal to the American Government for help;

but regarded it as beyond their competence to make a recommendation between these courses.

In the last few days and since the Committee reached these conclusions, the Viceroy has reported[2] that owing to unseasonal rain and hail, the Spring harvest of wheat and other grains has been seriously damaged. In addition 50,000 tons has been destroyed by the explosion in Bombay Docks. The consequence is that his estimate of wheat requirements is increased by roughly five hundred and fifty thousand tons, or put in another way, amount[s] to 724,000 tons for the 12 months beginning 1st May. This means that he required an average monthly importation of 60,000 tons in addition to 200,000 tons already arranged for the second and third quarters, and even this will not make provision for reserve to back procurement and price control. The failure to supply imports at something approaching this level will involve a grave risk that procurement will fail and prices rise with the result that either large sections of the civil population will be exposed to famine conditions or the military forces will not get their minimum requirements.

[1] No. 470. [2] No. 466.

India's food problem is a very serious one in itself but it is only one factor in a complex of threats to her economic stability. Others are transportation deficiencies; difficulties in the raising and movement of coal; excessive military demands on her industrial resources, resulting in a serious shortage of consumer goods; and a general trend towards inflation. (It is relevant to mention that an official Sub-Committee of the Cabinet Committee on the Indian financial position which, because of its anti-inflationary aspect, examined the possibility of diverting India's capacity from military to civil production, has recorded conclusions[3] which *mutatis mutandis* are closely similar to those of the Committee on Foodgrain Importations).

The point which I wish to emphasise is that each of these elements in the great strain on India's economy bears more or less directly on all the others. Relief of one will not be effective unless commensurate relief of others is afforded. But of them all the two most vital and the two most closely interconnected are food and transportation. Without the ready procurement of food, induced by a sufficient flow of imports, factories cannot work, nor coal be raised, nor railways operate, nor airfields be built, nor the Forces be fed. Without an improvement of transportation neither troops nor coal—whether for ships' bunkers, for factory consumption, for export or for the needs of the Indian railways themselves—nor food from surplus to deficit areas, can be moved.

Any increase of the present strain—and an increase is clearly threatened by the requirements of S.E.A. operation—and even a failure materially to relieve the existing strain, may well lead to a collapse in one or more vital parts of India's fragile economic structure on the adequacy of which all "logistic" calculations of operational requirements must depend. I understand that the C.O.S. are examining the potentialities of India as a base and have no doubt that they will take into account the complex of economic factors to which I have alluded. My anxiety is lest the fundamental position in this complex of the need to import grain in sufficient quantity should not be fully appreciated. This question cannot be dealt with alone nor its direct bearing on operational conceptions be ignored.

I am sending copies of this Minute to the Secretary of State for War and to Bridges.

L. S. A.

[3] Mr Amery is presumably thinking of the Committee on Indian Financial Questions' draft Report to the Cabinet dated 15 March 1944 and circulated as I.F. (44) 5. L/F/7/687

473

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 130

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *22 April 1944, 3.35 pm*

9359. Home Department telegram 4472[1] of 17th April. Transfer of Gandhi. I must put this to the Cabinet and I anticipate that objections may be raised. It might help to secure favourable consideration if the statement in para. (*b*) could be strengthened to say that you not only could but would reject demand for meeting with A.I.C.C. and if fuller examination were included of the possible embarrassments of such a request particularly if it were accompanied by some non-committal hint but no assurance of change of purpose. For purpose of Cabinet consideration it would also be desirable to omit the minor consideration of convenience to Bombay Government and the last paragraph. Could you have a further telegram sent revised on these lines.

2. It will not be possible to get a decision on this by 30th April but no doubt temporary extension of lease can be arranged.[2]

[1] No. 463; the date should be 18 April.

[2] In his tel. 861–S of 26 April Lord Wavell replied that a revised official telegram was being sent. He added that no difficulty was expected about the temporary extension of the lease, and that he and his advisers agreed that this move would be advantageous. L/P&J/8/623: f 129.

474

Mr Amery to Lord Cherwell

L/E/8/3323: ff 168–9

INDIA OFFICE, *22 April 1944*

Dear Cherwell,

I was away yesterday as I had a speaking engagement in Manchester, so I did not see your letter[1] about my foodgrains memorandum until this morning. It was essential to circulate the paper last night so that it could be available for Monday's Cabinet, and my Office therefore sent it round in its original form.

On the particular point you raise I enclose a note which has been prepared in my Office in consultation with Mr Kirby. Mr Kirby was an official under the Ministry of Food and was lent to the Government of India to advise them on rationing. He has been in the thick of food administration in India and

[1] No. 471.

has now returned here having completed his original contract, though he may be going out again.

What P. J. Griffiths said in his address related to the position at the end of last year, and I would certainly not deny that at that time the action being taken to enforce the Food Grains Control Order[2] and the Anti-Hoarding Order[3] was not as energetic as it might have been. There has, however, been a considerable tightening up since then. I think that you and Grigg both exaggerate the extent to which there is hoarding by large dealers for profiteering purposes. The main problem is to get the small producers to put their grain on the market.

Yours sincerely,

L. S. AMERY

Enclosure to No. 474

When Mr. Griffiths made the statement quoted in Lord Cherwell's letter of 21st April he was referring to the position as it was in the latter part of last year. Vigorous action has since been taken and the Department of Food now require a return monthly from all Provinces of all the prosecutions under the Food Grains Control Order, the Ration Order and similar Food Control Orders including the Anti-hoarding Order with notes of results. Instructions are continually being issued urging more drastic action in the enforcement of these Orders and the latest information shows that in Bombay alone there have been over 200 successful prosecutions for offences under these Orders monthly.

Hoarding by merchants is however not the problem which we have to face because grain merchants have been practically eliminated by the Provincial Governments' monopoly Procurement Purchasing Organisations which buy direct from the cultivator or the large Zamindars.

Our problem is to obtain the small surpluses of 50 million producers which do not come out on a rising market. There are practically no bottlenecks for securing control of India's indigenous resources of foodgrain. Comparatively negligible quantities pass through the rice and flour mills. Most of it is ground or pounded at home. What comes to the market comes on the heads or in the bullock carts of the 50 million small producers. Requisitioning from them on any scale at all is not possible. The administrative machinery for the purpose does not exist.

It is the producers, not the dealers, who hold back the grain. If dealers were holding these could be dealt with administratively under the Foodgrains Control Order which makes it necessary for every dealer to be licensed with the local authority and there is a team of inspectors who are continually investigating the transactions and operations of all grain dealers. The only way to secure all the producers' surpluses is to convince them that it is not worth while to hold them. This conviction cannot be conveyed over night but it can

best be secured by limiting the urban demand through rationing and by maintaining strict control over prices backed by visible reserves. But the supplies for rationing and for reserves have themselves to be found first. To expect rationing and price control to produce the supplies is to put the cart before the horse.

The producers' capacity for holding is practically unlimited, especially in the case of rice, since un-husked rice can be buried or kept in bins of straw for two or three years and improves with keeping. When prices are high and rising and goods which producers want to buy are lacking there is no inducement to sell their grain. They will either keep back more of it as a precautionary reserve (the normal carry-over made necessary by the uncertainty of the monsoon and which may amount to anything between 10 to 25 per cent of the total crop) or they will eat more.

[2] Government of India Notification No. Econ. Ad. (P.C.) 550/42, dated 21 May 1942, with later amendments. *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 21 May 1942.

[3] The Hoarding and Profiteering Prevention Ordinance 1943 (Ordinance XXXV of 1943). *Gazette of India Extraordinary*, 16 October 1943.

475

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 221

R/30/1/4: ff 56–9

Indian Minister at Washington

JOINT MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

24 April 1944

Since the end of 1941 an Agent-General of the Government of India has been stationed in Washington. He is attached to the Embassy, with the local diplomatic rank of Minister. Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai has held the post since it was created.

2. When Sir Girja was appointed it was laid down in his instructions[1] that the Agent-General should normally not deal with the United States Government in regard to political matters, which were to continue to be handled through diplomatic channels. In March 1942, however, His Majesty's Ambassador reported[2] that, as developments in the Far East had greatly increased the number of political questions arising between the Government of India

[1] Dated Simla, 7 October 1941. L/P&S/12/2636.

[2] In tel. 1374 of 10 March 1942 from Washington to Foreign Office repeated to the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. by the S. of S. for India as tel. 5304 of 23 March 1942. *Ibid.* See also No. 285, para. 4.

and the United States, he had encouraged Sir G. Bajpai to handle these questions direct with the State Department, with the result that he had come to occupy a position similar to that of the Dominion Ministers in Washington. Lord Halifax suggested that the Agency-General should be made into an independent Mission headed by a Minister. He urged that it was of the greatest importance that the Agent-General should be freed from the suspicion fostered by certain circles in America that in his arguments and exposition of conditions in India the Agent-General simply echoed the views of His Majesty's Government.

3. Lord Linlithgow, however, was strongly opposed to the proposal mainly on the broad ground of principle, that the change would not accord with the constitutional fact that His Majesty's Government are responsible for India's external relations, and that, as India can have no foreign policy of her own, it would not be proper and might not be safe for her to have her own independent diplomatic representatives. In view of Lord Linlithgow's objections we did not feel able to proceed with the proposal, but in consultation with the present Viceroy we have had the matter examined afresh; and the Government of India now recommend that the change should be made. We realise that there are objections, which may be briefly stated as follows:—

The establishment of diplomatic status while ultimate responsibility rests with His Majesty's Government may (*a*) even with a well-understood convention defining the allocation of business trench on the responsibility of His Majesty's Government, (*b*) lead to a demand for reciprocal American representation in Delhi, and for the exchange of diplomatic representatives with other countries, (*c*) attract criticism on the ground that the change of name does not imply real responsibility, and possibly foster an agitation for the appointment of a non-official as Indian Minister.

4. The Government of India, however, consider that these arguments are entirely outweighed by the importance of taking steps now to place India on the world stage, at least, as a Dominion with an independent diplomatic voice. In their view it is better to take the present opportunity to train Indian diplomatists under British guidance and to direct Indian thought from its present introvert tendencies towards foreign affairs, than to be rushed at a later stage, when conventions between His Majesty's Government and India will be more difficult to establish; and if increasing demands for the exchange of diplomatic representatives have to be conceded, Indian representation in the diplomatic field will increase Indian self-respect. They believe that these considerations outweigh difficulties of procedure and co-ordination.

5. We are in complete agreement with the Viceroy and his Government. We do not under-estimate the force of the objections, which bear a strong resemblance to those urged against Dominion representation between 1920 and 1926, and we do not deny that there is a considerable difference between the position of

Canada at that time and the present position of India. Moreover, we would agree that the strength of the case for separate representation for Canada in the early 1920's was that there were many questions between the Dominion and the United States which could be more easily settled direct than by reference to His Majesty's Government. It cannot be claimed, we think, that questions of purely Indian interest, capable of settlement by direct consultations between the Government of India and the Government of the United States, are as numerous as were questions of purely Canadian interest. But there are some, and the number is likely to increase.

6. We attach as an Appendix to this Memorandum a set of instructions on which the Government of India propose that an Indian Minister should work. This Directive contemplates what appears to us to be a logical threefold division of the responsibilities in relation to India of His Majesty's Ambassador and the Minister—

(*a*) purely Indian matters with which the Minister will deal;
(*b*) borderline cases with which he will deal in consultation with the Ambassador; and
(*c*) wider questions which must be dealt with by the Ambassador.

The arrangement by which the Minister will repeat to the India Office the reports which he makes to the Government of India on any matters save those of purely Indian domestic concern will ensure that His Majesty's Government have the opportunity to intervene on any occasion when this may be necessary.

7. It will be observed that the Minister is to be accredited for India and not merely British India. We feel that this is the wisest solution, for the constitutional niceties of India's position are not widely appreciated in the United States, and the State Department might be inclined to make difficulties over accepting a Minister expressly accredited for British India in the fear that they might lay themselves open to criticism for countenancing in some way the partition of India. This will mean that the Indian Minister will be responsible for handling matters which arise from the exercise of the functions of the Crown Representative, for example, the protection of the subjects of Indian States. To give him the necessary authority for this, we propose that there should be a standing instruction from His Majesty's Government to the Minister to accept as approved also for the States and States' subjects (Indian British protected persons), instructions from the Government of India expressed as concurred in by the Crown Representative. We feel that there might be some difficulty in authorising an Indian Minister to handle personal matters affecting Indian Rulers and their families, such as may arise for instance, on the occasion of a visit to the United States by an Indian Ruler, and we would propose that there should be an arrangement between the Minister and His

Majesty's Ambassador that the latter should for the present continue to deal with such cases. The Viceroy and the Government of India agree with these proposals, and we have incorporated instructions accordingly in the Directive.

8. The question of publicity presents special features in view of the fact that publicity about India and on behalf of the Government of India and publicity about the British record in, and policy towards, India, must inevitably be closely interwoven though the broad division of responsibility for these functions rests respectively with the Agent-General and the Embassy (and British Information Services). Following a special enquiry it was recently agreed by the India Office, Foreign Office, Ministry of Information and Government of India that, notwithstanding the notional delimitation of spheres of responsibility, the most intimate co-operation and the maximum of harmonisation between the Embassy (and British Information Services) and the Agent-General are in practice required. This is now firmly established.

9. It is not only in regard to publicity that a precise definition of the respective responsibilities of the Ambassador and Minister is difficult; and we agree with the Government of India[3] that a more exact delimitation of the Minister's sphere of action than that attempted in the Directive must be left to the evolution of conventions agreed to by him and the Ambassador. As we have said, Lord Halifax has already encouraged Sir Girja Bajpai to handle certain political questions and Sir Girja has signed the United Nations Declaration on behalf of India, represented that country at Hot Springs[4] and on U.N.R.R.A., held conversations in regard to Indian disabilities under the Asiatic Exclusion Act,[5] and taken part on behalf of India in discussions about reciprocal Lease/Lend. As our colleagues are aware, India was a signatory to the Treaty of Versailles and was an independent member of the League of Nations from its inception. The step now proposed seems to us a logical development in her evolution. It is in fact on the broad consideration that the time has come to encourage India to play a more definitely independent part in the sphere of international relations that we commend to our colleagues the proposal that an Indian Minister independent of the Embassy should be accredited by His Majesty to represent India in the United States of America.

L. S. A.
A. E.

Appendix to No. 475

Directive to the Minister for India in the United States of America

1. As Minister for India in the United States of America you will be responsible for representing the Government of India in all matters affecting interests common to the United States and India, and will exercise political and diplo-

matic control over all Government of India officials and official missions accredited to the United States.

2. Since under the present constitutional position the External Affairs Department conducts India's foreign relations in consultation with His Majesty's Government, you will address important reports, including those touching on matters of policy, to the External Affairs Department, repeating them to the Secretary of State for India for consultation where necessary with the Foreign Office, unless they deal with matters of purely Indian interest. Similarly instructions addressed to you from India will be repeated to the Secretary of State for India where necessary.

3. You will correspond direct with Departments of the Government of India other than the External Affairs Department, e.g. the Commerce, Supply, and Information and Broadcasting Departments, on matters relating to those Departments and raising no political or diplomatic issue.

4. You will maintain your own cipher establishment.

5. The broad division between your responsibilities and those of His Majesty's Embassy will be as follows:—

(*a*) The representation to the United States Government of issues arising from Indian domestic affairs (particularly in fiscal or commercial spheres) and the protection of individual Indian nationals (including Indian British-protected persons) in the United States of America will be solely your responsibility. In such matters the Government of India will instruct you without reference to His Majesty's Government, copies of papers being forwarded to the India Office as required.

(*b*) Issues affecting wider Commonwealth or war interests will be handled in consultation with His Majesty's Embassy, the Government of India instructing you after obtaining the approval of His Majesty's Government to the line of action proposed and His Majesty's Government simultaneously instructing the Ambassador where supporting action on his part is necessary. The Government of India rely on your discretion and on conventions already established in practice to ensure that close liaison is maintained throughout with His Majesty's Embassy. In all such cases communications in both directions will be repeated to the Secretary of State for India.

(*c*) Matters arising from the relations between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India or in regard to Imperial security or the prosecution of the war will be handled by His Majesty's Embassy, it

[3] Tel. 2060 of 22 February 1944 from G. of I., External Affairs Dept. to S. of S., para. 2. L/P&S/12/2636: f 110.

[4] See No. 285, note 3. [5] See No. 285, note 4.

being understood that the Ambassador will keep you informed to the extent necessary.

(*d*) In regard to matters arising from the exercise of the functions of the Crown in its relations with Indian States, His Majesty's Government desire that you should accept as approved also for the States and States' subjects (Indian British-protected persons) instructions from the Government of India expressed as concurred in by the Crown Representative. Personal matters affecting Indian Rulers and their families will fall to be dealt with by His Majesty's Ambassador.

(*e*) In regard to publicity about India you will be guided by the instructions contained in External Affairs Department telegram No. 9286,[6] dated the 29th October, 1943.

[6] L/I/1/809.

476

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 55th Conclusions

R/30/1/4: ff 60–2

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on 24 April 1944 at 6 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present were: The Maharaja of Kashmir, Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin, Lord Cherwell

INDIA

Food Grain Requirements

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 36th Conclusions, Minute 4)[1]

The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 216)[2] reviewing the latest position as regards the Indian food grain situation. The result was a net worsening of 550,000 tons and the Viceroy, in addition to the 200,000 tons already promised, now required 724,000 tons of wheat if the minimum needs of the civil population were to be met and the Army were also to receive their requirements.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that the position had been worsened by unseasonable weather, and by the disaster at Bombay, in which 45,000 tons of badly-needed foodstuffs and 11 ships had been lost. He was satisfied that everything possible had been done by the Authorities in India

to meet the situation. Given the threat to operations which any breakdown in India's economic life involved, he felt that we should now apprise the United States of the seriousness of the position. It must be for the War Cabinet to decide how far we should ask for their actual assistance.

SIR FIROZ KHAN NOON said that everything possible was being done in India to control prices and movements of grain. The outstanding factor was a definite shortage of food grains in the country. The effect of the unseasonable rains this Spring had been very serious. The reactions on labour, on the health of the troops and on the operational situation of food shortages were very grave. Substantial imports from abroad were essential, not only to meet the shortages, but because of their reaction on public opinion and morale, and their deterrent effect on hoarders. While hoarding by merchants was under control, the peasant was still uneasy and was holding back supplies. India, which had never been a self-supporting country, had lost her Burma imports and, in addition, was carrying a heavy increase of population and substantial numbers of troops. Malicious rumours were being spread by interested parties in India that the United States were willing to help with the grain but that His Majesty's Government would not apply to them. If we now approached the United States and they were unable to help, it would at least dispel that allegation.

HIS HIGHNESS THE MAHARAJA OF KASHMIR expressed his general agreement with the case as stated by the Secretary of State for India and Sir Firoz Khan Noon.

THE MINISTER OF WAR TRANSPORT pointed out that the existing programme of imports provided 35,000 tons of food grains per month for India from December last to the end of September next. He was satisfied that no further shipping could be made available, save directly at the expense of operations or of the United Kingdom import programme. The United States were themselves faced with very serious shipping difficulties.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that it was clear that His Majesty's Government could only provide further relief for the Indian situation at the cost of incurring grave difficulties in other directions. At the same time, there was a strong obligation on us to replace the grain which had perished in the Bombay explosion. He was sceptical as to any help being forthcoming from America, save at the cost of operations or the United Kingdom import programme. At the same time his sympathy was great for the sufferings of the people of India.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER felt that we were under an obligation to make good the loss due to the explosion and that we should raise that issue with the United States Government, adding that we were receiving very gloomy reports about the harvest in upper India, but did not

[1] No. 434. [2] No. 470.

want to press them on the general issue until we had firmer figures. Meanwhile the Government of India should be informed of the steps we had taken to try and replace the grain lost at Bombay, and should be invited to report again as soon as the harvest began to come in and they were in a position to let His Majesty's Government have firmer figures on which to work.

After further consideration the War Cabinet agreed as follows:—

(1) The Prime Minister would represent to the President the situation which had arisen from the Bombay explosion, with such additional detail in regard to the generally threatening character of the Indian food situation and its possible effect on operations, as was thought desirable at this stage. He would urge them to assist us with shipping, on the understanding, however, that any help given would be additional to, and would not come out of, the shipping already allocated to us, and would not be made in such a way as to reduce the United Kingdom import programme.

(2) The replacement of the 45,000 tons of grain lost in the Bombay explosion should be regarded as an obligation which His Majesty's Government must meet even if the American response was negative. The Minister of War Transport should consider what shipping dispositions would be necessary to ensure this in that event.

(3) The draft of a communication from the Prime Minister to the President should be prepared by a Committee, consisting of the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security (in the Chair), the Minister of Production, the Secretary of State for India, the Secretary of State for War, the Minister of War Transport, the Paymaster-General, and Sir Firoz Khan Noon. The Committee should report within a week's time.

477

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/662: ff 33–5

SECRET GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *24 April 1944*

Dear Lord Wavell,

Will Your Excellency kindly refer to my letter of the 21st inst.[1] about the Ministerial crisis here? Since I last wrote, things have not got any better and a good many further complications have arisen. There have been more long conversations between Khizr and Jinnah, but they have not yet led to anything approaching a definite conclusion. Many well disposed people are firmly of

opinion that these protracted discussions are exercising a markedly adverse effect on Khizr's Muslim supporters who are being led to believe that Khizr is steadily being led to acquiesce in Jinnah's demands and consequently feel that their safest plan is to show their adherence to the winning party before it is too late. Khizr has come to realize that this effect is being brought about to an increasing extent and that the time has arrived for him to make a firm stand. His present intention is to see Jinnah either today or tomorrow and tell him that, though he is prepared to agree that he himself and the Muslim members of the party should owe direct allegiance to the Muslim League alone and should in this sense cease to be Unionists, yet he must insist (1) that the combination of Muslims and non-Muslims supporting the present Government must retain the label "Unionist" and (2) that Jinnah must give him a statement in writing that he accepts this solution and will not interfere with the working and programme of the Punjab Government. If Jinnah agrees to this solution—in which I understand from Khizr that his non-Muslim colleagues are prepared to concur—the situation will, for the time being, remain more or less satisfactory. If on the other hand, as seems to me to be almost certain, Jinnah declines, then there will be an open conflict which Khizr says he is quite prepared to face even though it means in the end his political ruin.

One step which Khizr and his friends are strongly inclined to believe would steady things down and frighten further waverers from desertion is the early removal of Shaukat. There is no denying the fact that Shaukat by his betrayal of his leader and his colleagues over a period of several months has richly earned his removal. But it would be better to avoid removing him on political grounds and there are other reasons which entitle him to dismissal. I have during the last week or two come across an order of Shaukat's which amounts to the most glaring act of injustice that I have yet seen in this Province and all others whom I have had an opportunity of consulting are of the same opinion. This case concerns an Indian-Christian Inspectress of schools employed by the Lahore Corporation whose suspension was ordered by Shaukat several months ago. It is said that the reason underlying this was that she had offended one of Shaukat's subordinates. However this may be an enquiry was ordered into her conduct on eight different charges mainly connected with allegations of corruption. The officer making the enquiry (a European I.C.S. officer, Kennedy, in charge of the Lahore Corporation) found after careful investigation that not one of the eight charges had been proved; he showed that the main witnesses concerned had in at least one case given completely false evidence. Shaukat without reference to the Premier or myself gave orders that the lady was to be dismissed and he has recorded a note on the file saying that she had been "proved" guilty of corruption. . .[2] The proposal at present is that a meeting of the Cabinet should be held in a day or two, probably on the 26th or 27th, and that this

[1] No. 469. [2] Personal reference omitted.

particular case, which has come to my notice through a recent order passed by the Commissioner, should be taken up after other business. I should then tell Khizr and his colleagues in so many words that the injustice involved was such that, if they held the same views as Shaukat, I could see no option, much as I regretted it, but to intervene in the discharge of my special responsibilities under Section 52 of the Government of India Act. The five Ministers other than Shaukat would then, I have no doubt, assure me that they regarded Shaukat's action no less unfavourably than I did and that they felt it difficult to carry on with him as a partner and I should then tell him that as he had lost my confidence as well as that of his colleagues I felt my only course was to dismiss him from office and I would pass an order accordingly.

I must admit that I do not altogether like this course of action, but larger issues are at stake—the tranquillity of the Province and the continuance of the War effort. For Shaukat himself I have no feelings of sympathy, but I should have preferred for the sake of his family to have merely forced him to resign. But there are objections to this line of action. Firstly if Shaukat resigns he will have a better chance to pose as a political martyr—not that this danger will be entirely removed by his dismissal. Secondly a mere resignation would not produce the desired effect so far as concerns the staunchness of a certain influential M.L.A.—Sir Mohd Nawaz Khan of Kot, who comes from Attock, the same district as Shaukat. This Sardar has, it transpires, given his word to the League Party that he will go over to Jinnah if Shaukat (as he has already threatened to do) should resign his seat in the Cabinet. The motive for his giving this pledge is, he says, that he has become exasperated by Shaukat's constant interference in the life of the Attock District and wishes to manœuvre him out of his present position: this is not, I fear, a highly creditable motive but there is reason to believe that it is true. Sir Mohd. Nawaz Khan says that he would have to abide by his pledge if Shaukat resigned, but that in the event of dismissal there would be no obligation and he would stand firm by the Unionists.

I am well aware of the fact that if I take action on the lines contemplated I shall come in for a certain amount of criticism in the Press and elsewhere. It will no doubt be represented that the reason for Shaukat's dismissal is his political activities and that the Governor has acted in an improper manner. All the same it seems to me that, unless Your Excellency sees any objection, I should be prepared to face this development. Khizr has told me many times that he would much prefer to resign rather than expose himself to attacks from his fellow-Muslims, and that he is only resisting Jinnah in the manner now proposed because he is ready to carry on the war-effort at the risk of his political extinction in the long run. I cannot well encourage Khizr to contemplate resignation because I feel convinced that there would in this case be a stampede of waverers to the Jinnah side. At the same time I cannot deny that

he is taking considerable risks. This being so, it is not going to have a good effect if I decline to take any kind of a risk myself.

One other thing that Khizr has just told me is that Shaukat has been to see him and has informed him that Jinnah's plan is to start anti-Unionist demonstrations by Muslim students and that if these activities are suppressed or if the Unionists are otherwise defiant Jinnah may call on all League Ministries in other Provinces to resign. This may very likely be bluff designed to intimidate Khizr but I think I should pass it on for what it is worth. The turn that political events are taking here threatens to assume all-India proportions. I should be most grateful if Your Excellency would be good enough to let me know by telegram or otherwise as soon as ever is possible whether you have any objection to my acting in the way that I propose. I apologize for the length of this letter.[3]

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

[3] Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery of the gist of this letter in tel. 859-S of 26 April. He added that he had told Sir B. Glancy he approved of the proposed action and supported him strongly. L/P&J/8/662.

478

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *26 April 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of April 13th.[1] I am sorry that Rowlands did not make a greater impression on the Cabinet Committee on Indian Foodgrains Requirements. It was, it seems to me, a packed Committee, with that old menace the Professor who knows nothing of India (or very much about anything else really useful, I should say); and Leathers, an interested party, intent on holding on to all shipping he can; and Grigg, who is always inclined to be mischievous about India. No wonder they weren't helpful. You will have seen my latest telegram[2] on the subject in which I said that it was impossible for India to find the wheat required for the defence services. This I imagine will bring matters to a head, and a good thing too.

2. I am just back from a visit to Bombay. The damage is extensive and serious (about 500 killed, 2,000 injured, possibly 20,000 homeless, 70,000 tons of shipping lost, 40,000 tons of food, many millions of pounds worth of stores

[1] No. 458. [2] No. 466.

destroyed) but it might have been far worse and it was extremely fortunate that the Alexandra Docks were not burnt out, or the oil installations set on fire, or a large part of the city destroyed. Morale in Bombay seems to be remarkably high and I think they are rather proud of themselves. The fire services put up a splendid performance and some of their men were pumping water into the blazing ship which started the trouble at a time when it was almost certain that it would explode at any moment. The fire brigade casualities were heavy and I was glad to get an opportunity of congratulating some of the men. The A.R.P. personnel also did useful work and of course the services were soon on the spot in strength. We are putting out a press note today announcing that we propose to institute an enquiry and that the presiding officer will be a High Court Judge. Actually the intention is that the Chief Justice of Bombay should preside and that the other members of the committee should be a civil official or non-official—Indian—and an officer from one of the Defence Services. There will also probably be five expert assessors. The Chief Justice, whom I consulted in Bombay, would like to hold part of the proceedings in public but there may be objections on grounds of security. Anyhow we propose to get on with the enquiry as quickly as possible.

3. The second point about the Bombay disaster which I regard as urgent is the making of some announcement about compensation. We are putting out a preliminary statement today to say the matter is under consideration. We recognise that the Government of India will, in any case, have to foot a large bill and if we accept liability early and with good grace for what we shall have to pay eventually, we shall earn credit and keep up the present good spirit. It is said that the insurance companies, or some of them, are denying liability. This adds to the feeling of uncertainty. Some officials have been sent to Bombay to study the financial and legal position and I shall try to get Raisman's agreement to a definite statement in a few days time.

4. While I was in Bombay I saw the institutes for British and Indian seamen and I propose to do all I can to improve conditions for seamen in the various Indian ports. There will be an increasing need for amenities and I am not satisfied that merchant seamen have been properly looked after in the past.

5. I have telegraphed[3] telling you that Shafa'at Ahmed Khan will not accept the offer of an Adviserships and that he proposes to come back to India at the end of his term of office. You will I know be relieved at his refusal and I have now approached Sir A. F. Rahman on your behalf. We have not yet had a full report from Shafa'at Ahmed Khan about the effect of the agreement[4] in South Africa, but it seems to be satisfactory and Indian opinion is gratified, though most of the press try to play down what would otherwise appear to be something of a triumph for at least one Member of the Executive Council.

6. Things have come to a head between Khizr and Jinnah, and Glancy has now dismissed Shaukat from the Cabinet. I am telegraphing you a report today.[5] I will not speculate on Jinnah's future action, but I am certainly pleased that Khizr should have decided to stand up to him and to call a halt to the steady encroachment of the Muslim League on the legitimate field of the Provincial Government. I feel sure that had Jinnah captured the Ministry the Punjab would soon have been in confusion. The composition of the Assembly there is about 51 per cent. Muslims and 49 per cent. non-Muslims. Any division on communal lines would mean a weak and probably dishonest government, and a steady deterioration of inter-communal feeling. The Sikhs would be even more troublesome than the Hindus. Shaukat richly deserved to the [be] turned out of the Ministry—he has proved himself a most unworthy son of Sikander's. The case on which Glancy and the other Ministers decided to part company with him was evidently a scandalous one. The act of dismissal probably seems peculiar to those brought up in English parliamentary ways, but it was correct according to the constitution and I am satisfied that the objections to forcing Shaukat's resignation were sound. I am sending you copies of Glancy's letters[6] about this crisis. Before you get this you will probably have had reports of how subsequent events have shaped. I am quite aware of the risk that Jinnah may give us trouble all over India, though it hardly seems in accordance with his present policy to do so.

[Para. 7, on certain income tax deductions for Governors and the Governor-General; para. 8, on Sophia College, Bombay; and para. 9, on Sir H. Dow's leave, omitted.]

10. Casey has arrived today and will be staying with us until the 29th. He has set himself a strenuous programme and will have talks with a good many of the Members of Council and Secretariat officials here. Mrs. Casey has come with him. They both seem to be in good spirits.

11. I discussed with Colville the proposed transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar, and am sure that it is right and will do a great deal more good than harm. I hope you will approve it and not let the Cabinet be frightened by the Gandhi bogey. As you will have seen by my correspondence[7] with him, there is no appeasement or conciliation about it.

[3] Not printed. [4] See No. 465, para. 7. [5] See No. 477, note 2.
[6] Nos. 452, 460, 469, 477. [7] Nos. 387, 400, 417, 445 and 455.

479

Government of India, Home Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 128

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *27 April 1944, 5.20 pm*
Received: 27 April, 6.30 pm

4905. Please substitute following for our No. 4472[1] dated April 17th.
[*There follows a revised text of No. 463. Apart from some minor alterations, the differences are as follows:*

The first sentence of para. 1 ends at 'Ahmednagar', the remainder of the original sentence being omitted.

Para. 1 ends 'Expense is considerable for small party that will now remain but this is negligible consideration.'

Para. 2 begins 'We should not recommend transfer unless we were satisfied that advantage to Government lay in that course. Our original reasons for keeping Gandhi separate from members of Working Committee . . .' It continues as in the corresponding passage in para. 1 of No. 463 up to 'would be removed', except that 'to allow him to discuss matters with' replaces 'to put him with'.

Para. 2 then concludes: 'We doubt whether any change of heart would result but there might be some manœuvring for release possibly on parole in order to hold meeting of A.I.C.C. to reconsider position. We should have no hesitation in rejecting any such request unless intention to withdraw resolution of August 1942 was evident and appropriate assurances for future were given.'

Para. 3 reads: 'We consider advantages of proposal outweigh disadvantages' with the last two sentences of para. 1 of No. 463.

Para. 4 is identical with para. 2 of No. 463.]

[1] No. 463.

480

Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten to Chiefs of Staff (via Air Ministry)

Telegram, L/WS/1/654: f 202

IMMEDIATE *27 April 1944, 1.03 pm*
Received: 28 April, 2.20 am

SAC 1911. Following for Chiefs of Staff repeated C.-in-C. India.

The Viceroy has shown me his telegram 805–S[1] dated 19th April to Secretary of State for India and has officially advised me that India will not be able to meet Service requirements of wheat.

2. He informed me that the food position has further deteriorated since his message 628–S[2] dated 25th March and since my message SAC 1435[3] dated 3rd April. I consider the situation is so serious that unless arrangements are made promptly to import wheat requirements I shall be compelled to release military cargo space of S.E.A.C. in favour of wheat and formally to advise Stilwell that it will also be necessary for him to arrange to cut American military demands for this purpose. Auchinleck has already advised me that he is prepared to forgo a proportion of military demands in favour of food.

3. Secretary of State for India in message 5525[4] dated 4th March to Viceroy expressed strong view that approach to Americans might be prejudicial to approach through any other channel and stated his preference for Cabinet to consider position further. Since that time food situation has deteriorated still further with result that we face most serious position.

4. It is requested as matter of highest urgency that I be permitted to advise Stilwell as above.

5. I have repeated C.-in-C. India. Request you pass copies India Office.

[1] No. 466. [2] No. 440. [3] See No. 440, note 5. [4] See No. 409, note 3.

481

Memorandum Supporting a Resolution of the Non-Party Conference held at Lucknow, April 1944[1]

L/P&J/8/513: ff 364–71

Undated

This Memorandum deals exclusively with the resolution which was passed at a Non-Party Conference held in Lucknow on April 7 and 8, under the Chairmanship of the Right Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru. The terms of the resolution are:—

> "Having regard to the extreme and general dissatisfaction which prevails in the country this Conference is firmly of the view that it is necessary in the vital interests of almost two hundred million people that the legislatures should be restored in the five provinces of Madras, Bombay, the United Provinces, Bihar and the Central Provinces in which they have been suspended for four and a half years and that in such provinces Official Advisers should be replaced by coalition or as far as possible other representative Ministries."

[1] It appears from Lord Wavell's reply (No. 520) that Sir T. B. Sapru sent this memorandum to the Viceroy under cover of a letter dated 27 April 1944 which is not on the India Office file. In addition to the memorandum, the file contains copies of the resolutions passed by the Conference (Enclosure to this document) and of the speeches of Sir T. B. Sapru and Sir Jagdish Prasad (not printed) which presumably were also forwarded to Lord Wavell under cover of the letter of 27 April. L/P&J/8/513.

The other resolutions of the Conference are covered by the President's speech and the proceedings of the Conference.

2. Since November 1939 the five provinces mentioned in the resolution have been governed under Proclamations issued under section 93 of the Government of India Act. This section has been so applied as to concentrate all legislative, administrative and financial powers in the hands of Governors who have assumed to themselves the functions hitherto exercised by the Ministries and Legislatures. They control not only the whole of the Provincial administration but can make laws for all Provincial purposes including taxation and supply.

3. The legislatures have been suspended. By their suspension these five provinces have gone back nearly forty-five [? thirty-five] years as ever since 1909 there were provincial legislatures functioning with an elected element.

4. There has been a similar setback in the position of Indians as participants in the provincial governments. From 1921 onwards a majority of the members of the Government were Indians. After the suspension of the Constitution in 1939 the Governor became an autocrat such as he had never been before. The twenty years' association with Indians as colleagues in the Government has been completely abandoned. In place of Indian colleagues Governors have appointed advisers chosen from the Indian Civil Service. Out of eighteen such Advisers only three are Indians: one each in the provinces of Madras, the United Provinces and Bihar. The vital departments of Finance, Law and Order and General Administration are in the hands of Advisers drawn from the British section of the Civil Service which also provides three of the five Governors, the remaining two being chosen from England.

5. As under the Proclamation the Governor acts 'in his discretion' he is not subject to the control of the Governor-General in Council but only to the control of the Governor-General and the Secretary of State for India. Indians in the Governor-General's Executive Council cannot in any way interfere with the powers of a Governor exercised 'in his discretion'. He now governs free from all Indian influence whether provincial or Central. The territories and populations over which he rules form the major portion of British India and include 115½ million Hindus, 29 million Scheduled Castes, 19½ million Muslims and 2½ million Christians.

6. Section 93 of the Government of India Act under which these arrangements were set up is a very elastic section. It was not meant to perpetuate dictatorship but to safeguard the constitution. Under it the Governor could have maintained the legislatures though perhaps with less extensive powers. He could have laid down that in relation to the Executive Government they would be in the same position as the Central Legislature *vis à vis* the Executive

Council until such time as full responsible governments could be restored. This section could thus have been used to preserve some of the forms of popular government. It has been employed to remove every vestige of it. By the suspension of the legislatures the representatives of millions of non-Congress Hindus, of Muslims, Indian Christians, Scheduled Castes, of special interests such as the Universities, Commerce, the landed aristocracy have been rendered dumb and have been deprived of all power and influence. There is at present no recognised Constitutional channel through which the needs and grievances of vast populations can reach the Government. Provincial laws are passed, millions of public money collected and spent, large schemes of post-war reconstruction with huge financial commitments formulated without any public scrutiny or criticism.

7. What are Government's reasons for denying to millions of people who are helping in the war effort the most elementary rights of citizenship? The attitude of the British and Indian Governments has hitherto been that because of the intransigence of the Congress, stable ministries cannot be formed in the provinces in which the Congress party is in a majority in the Provincial Legislative Assemblies and that therefore there is no alternative to the complete suspension of the Constitution. Apart from this reason, there are, perhaps, others more powerful in influencing decision. It is alleged that administration under section 93 runs smoothly, that dictatorship is more suited to war conditions than popular government.

8. The Indian public does not accept these reasons as convincing. To say that administration is running smoothly is to give a totally wrong impression. The resentment against the continuance of section 93 rule is deep and strong. It comes rarely to the surface because of the drastic powers with which the officials are invested under the Defence of India Rules. The estrangement between the bureaucracy and the people has never been greater. It is only natural that when all sections and communities alike are completely shut off from the Government of their province, that there should be a widespread feeling of frustration, disillusionment, suppressed discontent and resentment. It is not statesmanship to create a silence of the desert by means of drastic laws and the suspension of the legislatures and to praise it as smooth administration, to rule nearly two hundred million Indians without any Indian associates and to treat it as dictatorship necessitated by and suited to war conditions. These very conditions demand that the voice of the people should be heard in the Provincial Assemblies. It is dangerous for any Government to sit on a safety valve.

9. Complete responsible Government or complete autocracy are not the only possible alternatives. If the British and Indian Governments refuse to

consider any other alternatives as a purely provisional and transitory arrangement it will only deepen suspicion as to the genuineness of their desire to restore popular governments in the section 93 provinces. It looks very strange indeed that the major portion of British India should be placed under a dictatorship for years as a suitable preparation for the art of self-government.

10. Government should make a sincere effort to form Ministries. In the altered circumstances of today it is possible and feasible to form successful Ministries by suitable combinations and adjustments in some provinces at least. If an effort genuinely made fails, other alternatives which exist should be explored.

11. Four and half years of hard and sullen experience have convinced most sections of public opinion that anything is preferable to one man rule under section 93. Their one desire is that its despotic rigours should be relaxed forthwith. It is now for His Excellency the Viceroy to realise the strength and depth of provincial feeling. The feeling has been growing nearly everywhere that a serious attempt should now be made to restore constitutional form of government in the provinces. Even if the majority party is unwilling to assume office and to accept responsibility for administration there is no reason why an attempt should not be made to establish coalition Ministries or Ministries of different political and economic interests represented in the Legislature. On the other hand there is every reason to believe that if an attempt is made to establish coalition Ministries or Ministries representing all the important elements in the Legislature such an attempt will, in all likelihood, succeed and there will be no opposition or resistance on the part of the majority parties in the event of their refusing to undertake responsibility on their shoulders. Conventions and understand[ing]s can be arrived at and it should give stability to the Government to run their administration smoothly. It would be a great mistake to suppose that the present autocratic rule of Governors is welcomed by people at large or that they have reconciled themselves to the existing arrangement as the only possible arrangement under which administration in these provinces can be carried on.

Enclosure to No. 481

Copy of the resolutions passed unanimously at the Non-Party Conference held at Lucknow on April 7 and 8, 1944 under the presidentship of the Rt. Hon'ble Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, P.C., K.C.S.I., LL.D.

1. This Conference places on record its sense of profound sorrow at the death of Shrimati Kasturba Gandhi who set a great example of service to the country and offers its deep sympathy to Mahatma Gandhi.

2. [*There follows the text of the resolution quoted in para. 1 of the covering Memorandum.*]

3. (*a*) This Conference demands that the Governor-General's Executive Council should be reconstructed without delay as a truly national Government with a Prime Minister at its head consisting entirely of non-officials enjoying public confidence and in charge of all portfolios subject to responsibility to the Crown during the period of the war and in regard to Defence without prejudice to the position of the Commander-in-Chief as the Executive head of the Defence forces.

(*b*) The British Government should recognise the right of India to direct representation through persons chosen by the National Government in all Allied War Councils wherever established and at the Peace Conference.

4. This Conference demands that with a view to create a proper atmosphere in the country Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders should be released forthwith. Their detention is justified neither on the ground of justice nor for reasons of State. An opportunity should be given to them as free men to review the whole situation and thus help in bringing about a settlement of outstanding issues between Hindus and Muslims and England and India.

5. As the elections to the Central and Provincial Legislatures were held from 7 to 9 years ago this Conference demands that fresh elections to all legislative bodies should be held without delay.

6. This Conference authorises its President, the Right Hon'ble Dr. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, to forward the terms of the resolution[s] to H.E. the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India and to take such other steps as may be necessary to achieve the desired objects.

482

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *27 April 1944*

Received: 5 May 19 4

The food position came up before the Cabinet on Monday[1] with Firoz and Kashmir present. Firoz spoke up vigorously, though the effectiveness of what he says is sometimes a little diminished by inaccuracies of detail which members of the Cabinet are well informed enough to spot. Between us we pressed the case strongly and undoubtedly, what with that and with the reports of the Chiefs of Staff, Winston was at last seriously

Quite true of Firoz, he seldom knows his brief.

W.

[1] No. 476.

perturbed and convinced that something would have to be done. All the same, he was not at first willing to do more than ask the President for shipping to replace the Bombay losses with a hint that more would be required later. Happily the matter of drafting the telegram was passed on to a small committee under Herbert Morrison,[2] and I persuaded them that making a big to-do over borrowing a shilling when what you really want is to ask for a tenner later in the day was not good tactics. So quite a good telegram has been drafted asking the President for help in respect of the whole of India's wheat deficit. This will come up before the Cabinet tomorrow morning and will I hope be accepted by Winston without more to-do. The next thing is to see whether the President will respond in any way to a request which may involve interference with American operations in the Pacific. The trouble is that the Americans are incredibly wasteful with their shipping but it is not easy for us to put that as the reason for our request.

2. A point that was made in the course of the Cabinet discussion was that the natural tendency of Governors after a week of hailstorms and unfavourable rains was to overestimate the damage, and it was even suggested that we should mark time over your request until the wheat harvest is completed and you know more exactly what the deficit will be. I think it is very important that if you have reason to revise the figures you should let us know as soon as possible. The Cabinet have never yet quite got over the fact that the Government of India underestimated this year's rice crop by four million tons up to within a few days of their announcing the larger figure.

Nonsense, no one knows the real figure even now.

W.

3. I had a good talk the other day with Kirby, who strikes me as a really useful man and worth your while getting back to India again. He promised me to talk strongly about the situation both to Lord Woolton and to Llewellin, who is now Minister of Food, and that may have its effect when it comes to tomorrow's Cabinet.

Kirby is first class and well worth bearing in mind.

W.

[Para. 4, on a conversation with Mr Elliot of the Eastern Group Supply Council, omitted.]

5. I have just had Hill here with Sir Henry Dale, the President of the Royal Society. They are very keen that the Indian scientists when here should be seen by the King and should then, by address or otherwise, ask for the Institute to be given a Royal Charter. The idea certainly appeals to me as worth pursuing once you are definitely convinced that the National Institute is the right body.

I have your telegram[3] saying that is your tentative conclusion but adding that you are waiting to see Ghosh before you decide. A further suggestion of Hill's is that two of the scientists might visit Washington, either on their way back from England, or (if they come later in the year) on their way here, in order to discuss with the other Empire Representatives the possibility of sending two or three Indian scientists to work on the Combined Scientific Board at Washington. That also seems to me to be quite a good idea provided the right men can be found and spared from India.

Meanwhile, I am still waiting to know whether your scientists are coming this next month as arranged, or whether in view of the possible difficulties of movement in this country you and they may have thought it better to postpone the visit. The one impression we do not want to create is that we are not anxious to see them as soon as they can conveniently come.

They have cold feet about going haven't they?

W.

6. Much the same, of course, also applies to your industrialists. I had a good talk when in Manchester the other day with Sir Raymond Streat, who would probably represent the textile industry in discussions with the Indian representatives. I was glad to find his attitude thoroughly realist and helpful, with none of the old Lancashire idea that India ought to be a reserved market for Lancashire cottons and that Indian industry was an unwarranted intrusion on Lancashire's preserves. He is also quite willing to discuss the provision of textile machinery for India, though of course our own needs in this connection and those of some other countries, too, may make the question of priorities pretty important.

7. I must say I was greatly relieved by Smuts' last minute action[4] over the Natal Indians question, and hope that it may have taken things round an awkward corner, even if apparently you have to keep Shafa'at on there as he refuses to be my Adviser. I cannot say from my own point of view that I regret his decision, though I am sorry that my readiness to help you out has come to nothing.

8. Your letter of the 8th[5] came in after your letters of the 18th[6] and 20th.[7] You seem to have had a very vigorous and useful tour in Bihar and Bengal. I was glad to see that you found everyone in good heart and fairly confident about the food situation. It would be pretty desperately serious if we had another rice famine, or rather rice price famine, on top of the wheat shortage.

9. I see Glancy has been compelled to dismiss Shaukat. I am afraid the boy's head was entirely turned by being made a Minister and that he has done no

[2] The minutes of this committee's meeting held on 26 April 1944 (Gen. 33/1st Meeting) are on L/E/8/3323.

[3] Not printed. [4] See No. 465, para. 7. [5] No. 454. [6] No. 465. [7] No. 467.

good since. The question will be what to do with him afterwards. Meanwhile, I gather that Khizar's government has a chance of carrying on, at any rate for the time being, in spite of Jinnah's efforts. What a nuisance some of these old men are!

10. I have seen the reply[8] which the Home Department sent to Gandhi about his complaints regarding the medical facilities permitted to Mrs Gandhi during her last illness. I feel sure that it was quite right not to use this occasion to score points, and I think the reply sent took quite the right line. Its tone contrasts very favourably with that of the letters which it answers.

[Para. 11, on the possibilities of food yeast production in India, omitted.]

[8] L/P&J/8/622.

483

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 120

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *28 April 1944, 8.55 pm*
Received: 8 April, 8.45 pm

886–S. You will be hearing from Bombay[1] of the condition of Gandhi which gives cause for anxiety. Surgeon-General Bombay will see him tomorrow and I will inform you of his opinion.[2]

[1] In tel. 104 of 28 April, the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept. informed Mr Amery: 'Medical opinion is that he [Mr Gandhi] stands risk of getting an attack of coronary thrombosis. His general condition weak and he looks very depressed'. L/P&J/8/623.

[2] Maj.-Gen. Candy's report, which indicated an improvement in Mr Gandhi's condition, was sent to Mr Amery in tel. 105 of 29 April by the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept. *Ibid.*

484

Chiefs of Staff to Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten (via Air Ministry)

Telegram, L/WS/1/654: f 83

IMMEDIATE *28 April 1944, 8.35 pm*

C.O.S.S.E.A. 94 Following from Chiefs of Staff.

Reference S.A.C. 1911.[1]

Food position is again under review by the War Cabinet, and you will at once be informed of the decisions taken.

2. Meanwhile you should say nothing to Stilwell.

Repeated to C.-in-C. India.

[1] No. 480.

485

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 59th Conclusions, Minute 1

L/E/8/3323: f 166

Those present at this meeting held in the Prime Minister's Room, House of Commons, S.W.1, on 28 April 1944 at 12 noon were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of item 1 were: The Maharaja of Kashmir, Sir Firoz Khan Noon, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Lord Leathers, Colonel J. J. Llewellin

Indian Food Grains

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 55th Conclusions)[1]

The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum (W.P. (44) 228)[2] by the Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security containing the report of the Committee appointed by the War Cabinet at its meeting on 24th April (W.M. (44) 55th Conclusions) to prepare the draft of a communication from the Prime Minister to President Roosevelt about the Indian food situation.

THE HOME SECRETARY informed the War Cabinet that since the Committee was appointed a further reduction had been reported in the amount of grain lost in the Bombay explosion. The Committee in these circumstances had thought it unwise to base any approach to the President primarily on the losses due to the explosion, and recommended in the draft[3] now circulated, for which they were indebted to the Minister of War Transport, an approach on broader lines. The latest figures received from India showed a very slight further reduction in losses at Bombay, but were not necessarily final.

THE MINISTER OF RECONSTRUCTION said that he had had the opportunity of a discussion with Mr. Kirby, rationing adviser to the Government of India,

1 No. 476.

2 This recited the instructions given to the Committee by the War Cabinet at its meeting on 24 April (No. 476), and explained why, for the reasons summarised by Mr Morrison above, the Committee had adopted a different approach to that indicated by the War Cabinet. R/30/1/4: ff 54–5.

3 The draft tel. appended to WP (44) 228 is similar to the text in No. 486 except that the following passages are additions to the former:
First para. In the second sentence, the words 'through which at least 700,000 people died'.
Second para. Last sentence.
Fourth para. In the first sentence, the words 'who are at a positive minimum if war efficiency is to be maintained'; in the third sentence 'and in the light of Mountbatten's representations.'
In the first para. of the draft the third sentence ends and the fourth sentence begins '. . . damage on our spring crops. Our shortage cannot . . .' *Ibid.*

who had confirmed all that the Secretary of State for India had previously said about the gravity of the position, and had suggested that it might be of assistance if a group of experts in rationing could be sent from this country to help in the administration of rationing in India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that he would welcome any such arrangement, and the MINISTER OF FOOD undertook to look into the matter.

THE DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER read to the War Cabinet the text of a telegram, SAC 1911[4] of 27th April, from the Supreme Commander, South East Asia Command, on the food situation, and informed them that the Prime Minister had suggested that certain portions of it should be incorporated in the telegram now proposed to be sent to President Roosevelt.

The War Cabinet:

Approved the draft telegram to President Roosevelt, subject to:

(*a*) the amendment of line 5 of paragraph 1 to read: "damage on the Indian spring crops. India's shortage . . ."

(*b*) the insertion of such of the arguments from the Supreme Commander's telegram SAC 1911 of 27th April and to such other drafting amendments as the Prime Minister might think desirable.

[4] No. 480.

486

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 165

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *29 April 1944*

TOP SECRET

393. Following is text of Prime Minister's personal telegram to President about Indian Food despatched today. It is for your personal information only.

Begins. I am seriously concerned about the food situation in India and its possible reactions on our joint operations. Last year we had a grievous famine in Bengal through which at least 700,000 people died. This year there is a good crop of rice, but we are faced with an acute shortage of wheat, aggravated by unprecedented storms which have inflicted serious damage on the Indian spring crops. India's shortage cannot be overcome by any possible surplus of rice even if such a surplus could be extracted from the peasants. Our recent losses in the Bombay explosion have accentuated the problem.

Wavell is exceedingly anxious about our position and has given me the gravest warnings. His present estimate is that he will require imports of about

one million tons this year if he is to hold the situation, and to meet the needs of the United States and British and Indian troops and of the civil population especially in the great cities. I have just heard from Mountbatten[1] that he considers the situation so serious that, unless arrangements are made promptly to import wheat requirements, he will be compelled to release military cargo space of S.E.A.C. in favour of wheat and formally to advise Stilwell that it will also be necessary for him to arrange to curtail American military demands for this purpose.

By cutting down military shipments and other means, I have been able to arrange for 350,000 tons of wheat to be shipped to India from Australia during the first nine months of 1944. This is the shortest haul. I cannot see how to do more.

I have had much hesitation in asking you to add to the great assistance you are giving us with shipping but a satisfactory situation in India is of such vital importance to the success of our joint plans against the Japanese that I am impelled to ask you to consider a special allocation of ships to carry wheat to India from Australia without reducing assistance you are now providing for us, who are at a positive minimum if war efficiency is to be maintained. We have wheat (in Australia) but we lack the ships. I have resisted for some time the Viceroy's request that I should ask you for your help, but I believe that, with this recent misfortune to the wheat harvest and in the light of Mountbatten's representations, I am no longer justified in not asking for your help. Wavell is doing all he can by special measures in India. If, however, he should find it possible to revise his estimate of his needs, I would let you know immediately.

[1] No. 480.

487

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 119

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *29 April 1944, 4.40 pm*

9888. Your 886–S[1] and Bombay report[2] on Gandhi's health. I am on the point of putting to Cabinet proposal in Home Department telegram 4905[3] of 27th and should be glad to know urgently whether in his present condition it is practicable to move Gandhi. If not I should prefer not to raise the matter.

2. I presume that if there is serious risk of his having an attack which might be fatal and result in immediate loss of power of speech you will consider allowing relatives to see him.

[1] No. 483. [2] See No. 483, note 1. [3] No. 479.

488

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 47

PRIVATE *30 April 1944*

TOP SECRET

900–S. (sic)[1]. Guard. Many thanks for good news in your 393[2] 29th April. Most grateful for all you have done to press our case.

[1] The India Office Inward Telegrams Register shows that the preceding tel. also had this No.
[2] No. 486.

489

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, Wavell Papers. Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6, p 23

IMPORTANT *30 April 1944*

PRIVATE

TOP SECRET

No. 901–S. Guard. Following for Prime Minister. I am most grateful indeed for your generous assistance over food imports and trust approach to President will succeed.

490

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *1 May 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have no new letter of yours to acknowledge, and this will be a short letter as I am off on tour early tomorrow morning. Usually I send my letters on Thursdays but this will have to be ready tonight. I am going to Sikkim to stay with B. J. Gould. Gould has just had news that his younger son has been killed in action, but I have decided to carry on with the tour, as I hope it will give him something else to think about. I shall hope to add to my knowledge of the north-eastern frontier and of our relations with Tibet and Nepal. After spending three days in Gangtok I am flying to Sylhet where I shall see the

headquarters of the Third Indian Division and have a talk with Lentaigne. Clow will meet me there, and I shall be able to discuss with him his difficulties which are considerable, particularly those concerning transport and civil supplies.

2. I was delighted to get your telegram[1] yesterday telling me of the Prime Minister's approach to the President about our food situation. I sent off a telegram of thanks to the Prime Minister[2] and another to you.[3] I am most grateful to you for your consistent support and for your unwearying efforts to convince your colleagues that our demands must be met. I do hope that the President will be able to assist with shipping, and I believe he will. Incidentally, I see that the Prime Minister speaks of having made 350,000 tons of wheat available which apparently involves a promise to us of another 100 or 150,000 tons over what has already been promised.[4] I am very grateful for this too. But I have said nothing to my Food Department as you wanted me to keep the news to myself.

3. I told you in my last letter about the Punjab crisis, and I have sent you since copies of notes[5] recorded by Glancy about the meeting of his Cabinet and his subsequent interview with Shaukat. The announcement merely said that under the orders of the Governor of the Punjab Captain Shaukat Hyat Khan had been dismissed from his office of Minister, and that "this action was taken by reason of a very serious case of injustice which had come to light in the exercise of Captain Shaukat Hyat Khan's powers as Minister". Jinnah has reacted vigorously in a speech at a Muslim League meeting at Sialkot in the Punjab, and I enclose copies of the resolutions[6] passed at that meeting. The meeting was attended by 17 members of the Legislative Assembly and it is probable that between 20 and 30 will desert Khizr and go over to a separate Muslim League Party in the Assembly. The *Statesman* and the *Hindustan Times* of Delhi have come out with leaders which mildly question the constitutional propriety of the Governor's action. You will notice that the announcement did not state that the dismissal followed the unanimous advice of the other Ministers. It was not even suggested that the Premier had advised to this effect though this was clearly the case. I have had no later report from Glancy about the situation in Lahore, but will keep you informed how things go. There is at present no sign of Jinnah wishing to cause disturbances or come in conflict with the law.

[1] No. 486. [2] No. 489. [3] No. 488.

[4] In tel. 432 of 11 May, Mr Amery explained to Lord Wavell, with reference to this para., that he was mistaken in thinking that the figure of 350,000 tons in No. 486 involved an increase of 150,000 tons over what had already been approved. Mr Churchill was referring to shipments for the first nine months of 1944 already received or promised. These were 50,000 tons monthly from January–March and 200,000 tons for the period April–September. L/E/8/3323: f 158.

[5] Dated 26 April 1944. L/P&J/8/662: ff 39–41. [6] See Enclosure to No. 493.

4. The latest reports[7] about Gandhi's health, which have been telegraphed to you, are more reassuring. I have seen Thorne this evening, and he is ready with a plan to be followed if Gandhi becomes dangerously ill. A doctor in whom Gandhi has confidence, Dr. B. C. Roy, is being allowed to see him and he may be able to persuade the old man to take the tonic and nourishing food which are prescribed. I have just telegraphed[8] to you in answer to your question[9] whether we wish to proceed with the proposal that Gandhi should be transferred to Ahmednagar Jail. The original plan holds good, with the added argument that Ahmednagar is free from malaria and it is important that he should not stay in a place where he is likely to get malaria again.

[Para. 5, on the Bombay disaster enquiry; and para. 6, on the liability for damage caused by the disaster, omitted.]

7. I mentioned in my letter of 22nd December 1943[10] that I was going into the long-term problem of the Services with Maxwell. Rowland, a retired High Court Judge of the Bihar High Court, has been put on special duty in the Home Department to make a comprehensive survey and Home Department will be sending you the proposed terms of reference which seem to me satisfactory. We would really have preferred an officer with administrative experience but we are so short of men that we have to be content with what we can get. I think Rowland should be able to do the job.

[Para. 8, on communications between the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Indian Institute of International Affairs, omitted.]

9. I am sure that we must do our best to provide facilities for a *Haj* pilgrimage this year on the lines contemplated last year when the pilgrimage had to be abandoned owing to the security position in the Indian Ocean. It is recognised that the *Haj* must be on a limited scale and the numbers restricted to, say, 5,000 pilgrims. We have asked for the release of two ships to make four voyages and I hope you will point out to the Admiralty the great importance of protecting these ships. Such a request coming at the present time may seem out of place but Muslim friendliness is of obvious importance and arrangements for 5,000 pilgrims are I think likely to prove a good investment even if they present difficulties. The *Haj* is in November, a long way ahead, but it is as well to get the matter considered in good time.

[7] Copies of daily reports on Mr Gandhi's health sent by the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept. are on L/P&J/8/623.
[8] Presumably No. 909–S referred to in No. 491.
[9] No. 487. [10] No. 278, para. 17.

491

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/513: ff 294–5

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *2 May 1944, 2 pm*
PRIVATE

399. Your secret and personal letter of 16th April.[1] I think Cabinet would much appreciate a short statement of your assessment of the political position. Would you have any objection to my circulating to my colleagues your own note without Twynam's with an explanation that this is an indication of how you assess the situation after six months' study of it but is not intended as a final expression of your views?

2. I am impressed with the cogency of Twynam's case against any move to appease Congress. I am not very clear whether you are in full accord with that but at present at any rate I imagine you would agree. I am a little uneasy for this reason at the suggestion that Gandhi be put with the Working Committee. We can no doubt resist any approach by them that falls short of a declared change of heart but I suspect that the Indian public generally will regard this as the first step in a process of appeasement.

[3.] In view of your 106[2] and 909–S[3] I agree that Gandhi must be transferred from Poona but in light of foregoing considerations are you satisfied that it is desirable to transfer him to Ahmednagar?

1 No. 462.

2 This tel., which was in fact from the Chief Secretary, Govt. of Bombay, Home Dept., informed the S. of S. of Dr B. C. Roy's tentative opinion after examining Mr Gandhi on 1 May. Dr. Roy felt: 'Gandhi has been very severely affected by malaria and it is imperative that he must be protected against further malarial infection. As Aga Khan's Palace is now infested with malaria mosquitoes Gandhi must be transferred to a place free from them. A second attack is likely to have even more serious consequences. Roy has persuaded Gandhi to take certain drugs which have recently been found effective in Bengal against malaria.' L/P&J/8/623: f 109.

3 Not traced in India Office Records, but see No. 490, para. 4.

492

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 236

L/P&J/8/623: f 106

Detention of Gandhi

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *2 May 1944*

I circulate a telegram from the Government of India recommending that in the altered circumstances due to the death of Mrs Gandhi in February at the Aga Khan's Palace in Poona, where she was detained with Gandhi and two or three others, Gandhi should be transferred to Ahmednagar Fort, where Kalam Azad, Vallabh[bh]ai Patel and other members of the Congress Working Committee are detained together.

Since this telegram was received Gandhi's health has deteriorated seriously through the after-effects of malaria. The latest medical reports show some improvement. Dr B. C. Roy, an independent medical specialist, who has examined Gandhi, has urged his removal from the Aga Khan's Palace, which is in a malarial area, to a place where he will be free from further infection. It is clearly essential to move him for this reason. The Viceroy reports that Ahmednagar is a non-malarial area.

The transfer to Ahmednagar could not of course be carried out without becoming known, but it could be made plain that it carried no suggestion of any change of policy. At the same time it would go some way to disarm the critics who assert that the continued refusal to allow consultation between Gandhi and the Congress leaders is evidence that Government are determined to do nothing to "break the deadlock," and rendered meaningless the Viceroy's invitation to co-operate and the Government's repeated statement that there can be no question of releasing the Congress leaders so long as they show no inclination to abandon the policy of the resolution of August 1942.

There is no doubt a risk that the result of putting Gandhi and the Working Committee in contact would be the development of some move calculated to embarrass the Government of India and His Majesty's Government. But the Government of India are confident that the advantages of the proposed transfer outweigh disadvantages of this nature. I therefore propose to telegraph my approval of the proposal unless any of my colleagues notify the Secretary to the War Cabinet by 6 p.m. on Thursday, the 4th May, that they desire the matter to be brought up for discussion in the War Cabinet.

L. S. A.

Annex to No. 492

TELEGRAM FROM GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 27TH APRIL

[*There follows the text of tel. 4905 (see No. 479), with the omission of para. 4.*]

493

Mian Mumtaz Daultana to Mr Turnbull

L/P&J/8/662: ff 42–4

TEMPLE ROAD, LAHORE, *2 May 1944*

Sir,

I have the honour to send herewith copies of resolutions No. I to VIII[1] passed at the Second Annual Session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League, held at Sialkot, from the 28th of April to the 30th of April, 1944. I shall be obliged if you will kindly place them before the Secretary of State for India, for his consideration, and necessary action.

Thanking you in anticipation.

I have the honour to be
Sir,
Your most obedient Servant,

MUMTAZ DAULTANA[2]

Enclosure to No. 493

COPY OF THE RESOLUTION, NO. I, PASSED AT THE SECOND ANNUAL SESSION OF THE PUNJAB PROVINCIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE, HELD AT SIALKOT (28TH TO THE 30TH OF APRIL, 1944)

"This Session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League deplores the whole attitude and action of the Hon'ble Malik Khizar Hayat Khan, Leader of the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly, in issuing a statement to the press on the eve of the Session of the Provincial Muslim League, knowing that the Session was being held at Sialkot on the 28th, with regard to the proposals placed before him by the President of the All India Muslim League, relating to the position of the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly, instead of coming to the Session and first placing his views before the Provincial League,

[1] Only resolutions I to III are printed here. Resolutions IV to VIII deal with Palestine, the Haj pilgrimage and some matters of local concern.

[2] A similar letter was sent to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy. In a note of 11 May, Mr Turnbull agreed with Mr Gibson it was best not to acknowledge the letter.

of which he is a member, and thereby showing by his conduct complete disregard of the Muslim League organisation in the Province. This Session further emphatically disapproves of his conduct in having taken final decision in the matter, on his own, completely ignoring even the Provincial League, not to speak of the All India Muslim League, and conveying through his statement that he is not subject to any discipline of the Muslim League organisation, its constitution and rules, which is unworthy of any member, who belongs to the Muslim League organisation."

COPY OF THE RESOLUTION, NO. II, PASSED AT THE SIALKOT SESSION

"This Session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League resolves that every member of the Muslim League Party in the Punjab Assembly shall declare:

(1) that he owes his allegiance solely to the Muslim League Party in the Assembly, and not to the Unionist Party or any other political party:

(2) that the label of the Coalition shall be dropped viz. the Unionist party:

(3) that the name of the proposed Coalition shall be the Muslim League Coalition Party."

COPY OF THE RESOLUTION, NO. III, PASSED AT THE SIALKOT SESSION

"It is the considered view of the Session of the Punjab Provincial Muslim League that the action of the Governor of the Punjab in dismissing Captain Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, one of the Muslim League Ministers in the Punjab Government, raises very grave Constitutional issues which have a very serious bearing on the functioning of a democratic Government and requests the All India Muslim League to take cognisance of the matter and lay down such policy as it considers proper for the guidance of Muslim League Ministries in the various Provinces.

"This Session calls upon the Governor of the Punjab that without prejudice to the question of the exercise of his powers of dismissing an individual Minister under Section 51 of the Government of India Act, in fairness to Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan, he should publish the facts of the case, charges and allegations against him and grounds which have led the Governor to take the action which he has done, so that Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan is given an opportunity of placing his defence before the people, as it is a very serious matter to cast reflection on the character of a man, without either asking him for an explanation or affording him the opportunity and facility of clearing up his character.

"This Session further requests Hon'ble Malik Khizar Hayat Khan Tiwana, Premier of the Punjab, to press the Governor to afford all facilities to Sardar Shaukat Hayat Khan to clear up his position and in the event of the Governor declining to do so, this Session calls upon Malik Khizar Hayat Khan and Mian Abdul Haye, the remaining two League Ministers in the Punjab Cabinet, to resign their offices."

494

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *3 May 1944*
Received: 11 May

The Dominion Prime Ministers' Conference—stress is being laid all the time on its being that and not a full-dress Imperial Conference—opened very successfully on Monday. Kashmir and Firoz made appropriate speeches immediately after the Dominion Prime Ministers and Firoz's speech, though it somewhat over-painted the lily, was well applauded by those present. We had a series of photographs afterwards and I only hope that critical India will not at once fasten on the fact that her Representatives were not in the front row of chairs.

2. Last Friday we had a Government Lunch to them, at which they both spoke very pleasantly, while yesterday I presided over a private lunch to them of the Empire Parliamentary Association before they went to address the meeting itself. Kashmir gave a very pleasant and sensible little talk, probably concocted for him by Hailey, while Firoz spread himself vigorously over the extent to which India is already some 7/8ths of a Dominion, and certainly did not mince his language in talking about Congress. His speech was certainly very much enjoyed by the members there.

3. Mackenzie King told me at our first meeting that he has for a long time past been trying to find a suitable High Commissioner to exchange with India, but did not feel that he ought to start the experiment with anything but a first-rate man. He did have one very good man whom he had practically settled on and then found he could not find a substitute for him in the work he was doing. In view of your own difficulties in finding a suitable man for Australia there may be no disadvantage in the delay.

4. I am telegraphing[1] to you to ask if you would like your own appreciation, without Twynam's memorandum, circulated to the Cabinet. Winston is, I think, still apprehensive that you might be trying to find some premature solution and your present provisional conclusion may help to keep him happy. On the other hand, if you are likely to think that something could be done in the near future you may prefer not to have it circulated. I confess I doubt myself very much whether any solution depending on what is called "breaking the deadlock" is possible yet. On the other hand, Twynam's suggestion that you might bring in Rajagopalachari and possibly a Muslim Leaguer may be

[1] No. 491.

worth considering, though I should very much doubt the desirability of talking about a twin portfolio of Constitutional Development. If you did it at all, they should come in for ordinary appointments, or else as extras without portfolio and leave the constitutional matter to simmer gently between them.

5. What I have sometimes wondered is whether it may not be worthwhile recognising the fact that in certain Provinces self-government has continued, and inviting the Governments as such to meet in quite informal conference to discuss the possibilities of the constitutional future. The disadvantage of that is that, with the exception of Orissa, they are Governments on whom Jinnah might exercise undue pressure in favour of a declaration of Pakistan. A possibility might be to get these Governments to meet informally nominated leading men from other provinces. But there again it is difficult to find men of sufficient standing not under Congress control. Anyhow, the matter can with advantage wait.

6. Winston has just let me know that he would like the question of Gandhi's transfer to be raised in Cabinet and no doubt you will hear in a few days what line they would wish you to take. His health of course raises the wider question whether, if he really is in danger of dying, he should be released unconditionally. The worst of it is that he would then probably stage a vigorous recovery and make as much mischief as he can. On the other hand, if he is really past that stage there might be considerable advantage in letting him gradually fade out at liberty.

7. I hear from Kashmir that the Jam Sahib has really been very seriously ill and that his life was actually in danger at one moment. I am truly sorry for that, for he is a good fellow and a good friend, even if not a very strong personality. I am enclosing a line to him with this.

[Para. 8, on employment for Sir Hubert Young; and para. 9, on a visit to India by Major A. M. Lyons, omitted.]

495

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *4 May 1944, 3.50 pm*
Received: 4 May, 3.30 pm

No. 938–S. Latest reports show progressive deterioration in Gandhi's anaemia, blood pressure and kidney functions all of which in opinion of Dr B. C. Roy shared by Surgeon-General Candy have tendency to produce coronary or

cerebral thrombosis. Candy's words are "I think he is on the slippery slope". Governor of Bombay recommends immediate unconditional release on medical grounds and Governors of Madras and Bengal make same recommendation. Of non-Presidency Governors, Central Provinces and North-West Frontier Province have not replied to enquiry made by me some days ago. Remainder with exception of United Provinces and Sind favour unconditional release on medical grounds either immediately or when life is in grave danger[1] which according to medical reports is now the case. United Provinces and Sind agree that release if approved must be unconditional but express doubts as to need for immediate release based on Gandhi's known capacity for recuperation and possible fallibility of doctors. They have not seen medical opinion quoted above. No Governor expects serious reaction from release on medical grounds but some particularly Bombay and United Provinces recognise possibility of embarrassment later if Gandhi recovers.

2. This is a case in which I consider we must be guided by medical opinion. Deterioration in Gandhi's health appears such that his further participation in active politics is improbable and I have no doubt that death in custody would intensify feeling against Government. Thorne and Chief agree. I have not consulted other Members of Council most of whom are away on tour. I am accordingly instructing Bombay Government to release Gandhi unconditionally at 8 a.m. on Saturday, 6th May, with announcement that release is entirely on medical grounds and am informing all Governors accordingly.[2]

[1] 'grave danger' deciphered as 'any more danger'.

[2] An abbreviated version of this tel., omitting the Governors' recommendations summarised in para. 1, was given to the Maharaja of Kashmir and Sir Firoz Khan Noon. L/P&J/8/623.

496

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/18: f 49

PRIVATE *4 May 1944*

121–S.C. Sudden deterioration of Gandhi's illness has caught me in Sikkim so have only telegraphic reports to guide me. Medical opinion and advice from Home Department and from Governors are overwhelming in favour of immediate release. Home Department's interpretation of the Doctors' opinion is that Gandhi is never likely to be active factor in politics again. Release therefore seems inevitable since we should have no legal justification for detaining him in such condition. Though we shall gain little credit for release if death occurs immediately afterwards we cannot lose anything and therefore sooner release takes place the better. Home Department in fact were in favour of

release forthwith without waiting to inform you. I should anticipate serious difficulties and resignations from Executive Council if Gandhi died in custody. Also far better to release before public agitation becomes formidable and we may appear to be yielding to it.

497

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/P&J/8/623: f 104

INDIA OFFICE, *4 May 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 18/44

Prime Minister

Gandhi

1. I have just received the attached telegram[1] from the Viceroy recommending his unconditional release on grounds of health.

2. The doctors (i.e. General Candy, I.M.S., the Surgeon General to the Government of Bombay, and Dr Roy, an eminent Calcutta physician) reported yesterday that Gandhi's condition must be regarded as serious and that there is danger of coronary or cerebral thrombosis. He is suffering from anaemia and low blood pressure resulting from malaria and his condition has worsened after an earlier improvement.

3. You will see that Wavell considers on the medical advice that Gandhi is unlikely to be an active factor in politics again. I agree with Wavell that it would be a grave mistake to allow Gandhi to die in detention. It would be remembered against us for a long time, quite apart from the immediate difficulties which would result and the probability of resignations from the Viceroy's Council. Even a complete supporter of ours like Firoz Khan Noon feels strongly on the point. It is quite a different position to that of illness induced by fasting.

4. If we think it right to release Gandhi I should prefer to act before an outcry develops here and in India and not appear to yield to pressure.

5. I hope therefore you will approve my authorising Wavell to release Gandhi at once without waiting for the matter to be taken in the Cabinet tomorrow evening. The medical reports suggest that there may be little time to lose. Release on medical grounds does not raise the same questions as detention with the rest of the Working Committee.

L. S. AMERY

[1] Presumably No. 495.

498

Mr Churchill to Mr Amery and Sir E. Bridges

L/P&J/8/623: f 101

SECRET 10 DOWNING STREET, WHITEHALL, *4 May 1944*

MOST IMMEDIATE

Secretary of State for India

Sir E. Bridges

I am prepared to agree to Gandhi's release on medical grounds at this time in view of the Viceroy's request.

We can always arrest him again if he commits new offences. It is of course understood that there will be no negotiations between him and the Viceroy.

Ask our colleagues on the War Cabinet only if they concur. Otherwise a meeting must be held.

W. S. C.[1]

[1] In a letter of 4 May to Mr Attlee, Mr Amery explained he had sent No. 497 to Mr Churchill that morning 'and had a word with him . . . He at first said he would have an emergency Cabinet at 7 this evening, but has since sent a message to say that if I could collect the opinions of the War Cabinet and they agreed on Gandhi's immediate release he would be prepared to concur.' Later on 4 May, Mr Turnbull informed Mr Peck that all members of the War Cabinet concurred in Mr Gandhi's release. L/P&J/8/623: ff 98–9.

499

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 93

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *4 May 1944, 5.15 pm*

10244. Your telegram 939–S.[1] Cabinet agree to Gandhi's release unconditionally on medical grounds. Please telegraph most immediate full text of announcement and time at which you will issue it in India. If you should decide to make announcement before Saturday it may be desirable to make simultaneous announcement in House of Commons tomorrow.[2]

[1] This should read '938–S'; i.e. No. 495.

[2] Lord Wavell sent Mr Amery the text of the Central Government announcement to be issued at midnight I.S.T. on 5/6 May in tel. 953–S of 5 May. L/PO/10/25.

500

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/18: f 49

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *4 May 1944, 5.10 pm*

409. Your private telegram No. 121–S.C.[1] of 4th May. Please see my 10244. Prime Minister has noted that there should of course be no negotiations with Gandhi and that he can be rearrested if he commits new offences.

[1] No. 496.

501

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 241

L/P&J/8/623: f 91

India

Release of Gandhi

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *5 May 1944*

Since I circulated my memorandum W.P. (44) 236,[1] proposing that Gandhi be moved from his present place of detention to Ahmednagar, where the Congress Working Committee are detained, Gandhi's health has taken a turn for the worse. On 3rd May the medical opinion of General Candy, the Surgeon-General, Bombay, and Dr. B. C. Roy, a distinguished physician from Calcutta, was that his condition had deteriorated after a temporary improvement and must now be regarded as serious. Both doctors consider that there is progressive deterioration in anaemia, blood pressure, and kidney functions, all of which have a tendency to produce coronary or cerebral thrombosis.

The Viceroy telegraphed[2] to me yesterday morning saying that in view of the serious nature of the medical reports he recommended that Gandhi should be unconditionally released. He considered that serious difficulties would result if Gandhi died in detention and that there was likelihood of resignations from his Executive Council. He added that the medical reports lead his advisers to think that Gandhi was unlikely to be an active factor in politics again. I was entirely in agreement with the view that in these circumstances Gandhi should be released, and felt that there would be great advantage in releasing him before an outcry developed to which we should appear to be yielding.

By the authority of the War Cabinet, who, with the Prime Minister's approval,[3] were consulted individually, I have now authorised[4] the Viceroy to

release Gandhi unconditionally on medical grounds, on the understanding, of course, that there will be no negotiation with him. The Viceroy intends to release him on Saturday at 8 a.m.

In these circumstances the proposal in W.P. (44) 236 will not require to be further considered.

L. S. A.

[1] No. 492. [2] Nos. 495 and 496. [3] See No. 498. [4] Nos. 499 and 500.

502

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/513: f 292

PRIVATE *8 May 1944*

971–S. Your private telegram 399[1] of May 2nd. I have no objection to circulation of my paper to Cabinet with explanation you propose.

2. I am entirely against appeasement of Congress as at present constituted and with its present policy. Transfer of Gandhi to Ahmednagar was not measure of appeasement but best method of getting him into healthier and more congenial surroundings with possible political advantage to ourselves. Transfer proposed has however been superseded by release on medical grounds and I need say no more about it.

[1] No. 491.

503

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/662: ff 24–5

SECRET GOVERNMENT HOUSE, LAHORE, *8 May 1944*

No. 506

Dear Lord Wavell,

I am afraid it is some time since I gave Your Excellency a general account of developments in the struggle between Jinnah and the Unionists, but we have been through a harrowing time during the past fortnight and fully occupied

in trying to keep the wolf from the door and steady the nerves of the faint-hearted.

The main events have been reported *ad nauseam* in the Press. You will, I hope, have got my note[1] on Shaukat's dismissal. This was a most unpleasant business and I was glad when it was over. I had intended to give out merely that Shaukat was dismissed from his office, but it became evident that a bald announcement such as this would leave the Ministers dismayed. So we put out a brief statement that the dismissal was due to a very serious miscarriage of justice for which Shaukat in the exercise of his functions had been responsible. The announcement certainly caused a sensation. As was to be expected, the popular belief was that the real reason for Shaukat's fall was his political activities in the cause of Jinnah and the League. Shaukat set himself up as a martyr and a considerable wave of sympathy for him began to spread in various quarters.

This incident was followed almost immediately by a complete breakdown in the negotiations between Jinnah and the Premier. Jinnah flatly declined to accept any compromise that Khizar suggested, and Khizar decided to be the first to get his version to the Press; his account was on the whole an effective exposition and gave people to think. Jinnah was furious and charges and counter-charges, some of them apparently quite trivial, were interchanged. Very soon after the break-down Jinnah and his friends left Lahore for Sialkot, where a League meeting was held on a fairly considerable scale. There was no kind of disorder, but fiery speeches were made denouncing Khizar and the Unionists and everyone connected with them. Shaukat was hailed as a hero and festooned with garlands and said that he was ready for further sacrifices. His dismissal was represented as a tyrannical and unconstitutional act; it was said that as Shaukat had been dismissed merely because he had dismissed a school Inspectress, the next step should obviously be the dismissal of the Governor; the main speaker (M. Barkat Ali) who laboured this point can no doubt claim some experience in the matter of dismissals, having been dismissed himself from the P.C.S. for misfeasance several years ago.

Jinnah returned to Lahore and the wires continued to be jerked violently from all directions. Khizar is still far from happy, but he is in much better heart than before the clash took place. He has been called on to give his explanation to the League and is preparing his reply, which is likely to be evasive. He has also been asked to render a full account to the League of Shaukat's dismissal and to report the Council proceedings and the part that he played throughout this incident. He should not, I think, have any very great difficulty in blocking this line of advance, as revelations are accumulating about Shaukat's irregularities. Rumours regarding his indiscretions have been afloat for some time; I referred to these in my note on my interview with him which Your Excellency will have seen. . . . [Two passages, on particulars of petitions received

from various small landholders in the neighbourhood of Lahore and of the outcome of enquiries into them, omitted.] . . . These stories are now widely current in Lahore and Shaukat's attempts to represent himself as a martyr are suffering a set-back in consequence. I do not want more scandal, if it can be avoided, and I hope that Shaukat's relations may prevail on him to recede from the arena. . .

I do not want to be over-optimistic, but on the whole the situation has, I think, improved. What I particularly feared was the secession of certain influential landlords from the Unionist cause; this was imminent at one time and it was calculated to lead to a general stampede. The danger of this is for the time being less acute. Sir Muhammad Nawaz Khan of Kot, whose case I have mentioned in a previous letter,[2] appears to be successfully anchored on the right side. The same is true, I believe, of certain important landholders in the Multan Division. We may have to expand the Cabinet by one additional Muslim Minister in order to stabilize support, but this is a comparatively small price to pay, and the non-Muslim Ministers seem ready to reconcile themselves to the position. If all goes well, Jinnah's adherents among the M.L.As should be confined to a dozen or so, largely people of low repute. Jinnah is expected to depart for Kashmir today, but he intends, it is said, to leave his henchman Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan of Karnal in Lahore to supervise the activities of the League. Press propaganda and preaching by Maulvis and others form part of the League programme. The Unionist organization, which has been quite inert hitherto, is now bestirring itself and it is to be hoped that sinister influences will be counteracted. Jinnah has not, I think, been well-advised in trying to brush aside the Sikander–Jinnah Pact[3] as a unilateral document drawn up by Sikander for his own convenience; it appears to be a fact, though no documentary proof has as yet come my way, that Jinnah actually signed the pact, that Muslim members of the Unionist Party subscribed to the Muslim League on the express condition that this was to be "subject to the Sikander–Jinnah Pact", and that Jinnah accepted these qualified assurances without demur. A good deal of capital can be made out of this, and Khizar and his friends should be able to work up considerable support for the plea that Punjabis should be left free to manage their own affairs. Official influence is being mobilized to persuade the public that, if the war effort in which the Punjab is vitally interested is to be successful and if there is to be peace and tranquillity within the province, there should be a united front of all communities. One Commissioner reports that many Muslims in his Division express a feeling of pride in the stand made by the Punjab Premier to resist outside domination. Jinnah's declaration that he will not hamper the war effort is, I hope, too negative and colourless a proposition to carry much weight.

[1] See No. 490, note 5. [2] No. 477. [3] See No. 73, note 2.

We are by no means out of the wood, but the outlook is not so black as it was, and there is a possibility that more of those who were ready to desert the Unionist Party may see fit to return to the fold; some of them show signs of marked uneasiness.

Yours sincerely,

B. J. GLANCY

504

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *9 May 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letters of 20th[1] and 27th April.[2] The most important event since I last wrote is Gandhi's release on medical grounds. Just before I went on tour on 2nd May the reports on his condition were rather more reassuring. But on the morning of 3rd May the Bombay Government informed the Home Department that B. C. Roy and Candy thought very badly of Gandhi's condition which might, in their view, be leading up to coronary or cerebral thrombosis. Before leaving New Delhi I had sent a telegram to all Governors asking them what course they would recommend should Gandhi's condition deteriorate. Thorne held very strongly that we could not let Gandhi die from natural causes in our custody, and he was reinforced by the almost unanimous opinion of the Governors. Some of the Governors, particularly Hallett, Twynam and Dow, were sceptical about the medical reports, but all were agreed that there would be no troublesome reactions on his release. It would, I suppose, have been possible to get another medical opinion—B. C. Roy's political views are well known, and Candy, the Surgeon-General, is a confirmed pessimist—but doctors being what they are, it seemed unlikely that we would get anything more definite. On the information available Thorne considered that we must release Gandhi immediately and telegraphed this recommendation to me. Only two Members of Council besides Thorne and the Chief were in New Delhi at the time. Thorne consulted the Chief but not the other two (Sultan Ahmed and Mohammad Usman) because he felt that in the circumstances the main responsibility must rest with him and myself. I had actually to take the decision at 3 a.m. in the morning—quite like old times in the Middle East when I was often wakened at that hour by some development on one of my many fronts. The rest of the story you know, and I am most grateful to you for sending me[3] the Cabinet's decision so quickly. The announcement

was naturally well received in the press, though there has been a tendency to read into it an intention on my part to reopen negotiations. I am told that one American correspondent filed a silly message to the effect that Government had at last decided to mobilize India's war potential and that, however the announcement might be worded, this was its secondary motive. He foreshadowed a meeting between Gandhi and myself. On the whole, however, the press has been fairly sensible. Immediately after his release Gandhi moved to the house of Lady Thackersey, an old friend of his in Poona, and seems to have received a large number of visitors. He is now reported to be going to Juhu to recuperate, and his doctors have forbidden promiscuous interviews for a fortnight. It is impossible to say what the state of his health really is; he is not far off 75, and is obviously not strong. But I shall not be surprised if he makes a good recovery and gives us such trouble as he can later. I was from the first doubtful about the medical reports, but agreed with Thorne that we must in the circumstances accept them at their face value. We had to let the old man out some time, and on the whole I think that the opportunity of his illness has not been a bad one.

2. I am sorry that the third wheat forecast has embarrassed you,[4] and I have given orders which will, I hope, lead to better co-ordination between Education, Health and Lands and Food Departments and within the Food Department itself in matters of this kind. The third wheat forecast is a routine compilation, by the Director-General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics at Calcutta, of provincial figures which are supposed to relate to the area and condition of the crop during the second half of March. In fact, owing to the size of the country, the provincial returns are not uniform, and it is probable that this forecast took no account of the damage which occurred in the last week of March and the first week of April. I have ascertained that the return from the United Provinces related to the first and not the second half of March, and enquiries are being made about the returns of the other wheat-growing Provinces. You cannot expect forecasts of this kind to coincide with the Food Department's estimates of deficits and surpluses, which are based on separate declarations from the various Provinces. Another point to be borne in mind is that wheat cannot be considered by itself. It is known that the *rabi jowar* and the gram crop were very seriously damaged by the rain, and this will put up the demand for wheat.

[1] No. 468. [2] No. 482. [3] Nos. 499 and 500.

[4] In tel. 405 of 3 May, Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell of a Reuter report he had seen of the third wheat forecast for 1943–44 which suggested the wheat yield would be about average. Mr Amery was concerned as to how he should answer suggestions that the forecast threw doubt on the Indian wheat shortage. In an interim reply in tel. 961–S of 5 May to Mr Turnbull, Sir E. Jenkins stated the third wheat forecast did not take full account of rain and hail damage to crops in early April nor of damage to cut crops on the threshing floors which was extensive in the United and Central Provinces. L/E/8/3323.

I am glad you saw Kirby. I had a talk with him just before he left and thought him a good man. I hope we may be able to get him back.

* * *

4. Coal is still giving me a great deal of anxiety. Except in February we have failed to reach our target for raisings, and the supply of wagons is always below requirements. Benthall and Ambedkar during recent tours sent in pessimistic reports, the former to Auchinleck and the latter to me. The remedy suggested by them is increased aid from the Army. But Auchinleck (who has been most helpful and has lent to the civil departments a Brigadier Westrop who is an expert on the use of heavy machinery) quite rightly points out that the most the Army can do is to reduce the gap between actual and planned raisings by about 100,000 tons a month, and that the real remedy lies in drastic reforms on the civil side. Young, the Coal Commissioner, who has not been getting on well with the War Transport and Labour Departments, has now submitted his report recommending a new organisation. He thinks that the production and distribution of coal should, during the war, come under the Supply Department which has experience of emergency administration of this kind. The Head of the new organisation would then act as a Director-General under the Supply Department and wield extensive powers. He would have a small secretariat of his own and two executive divisions, one for production, including production in the railway collieries, and the other for distribution. Young believes that our estimates of requirements have so far been inaccurate and that we must plan now on the assumption that as the war moves eastwards there will be large demands for Indian coal in the reoccupied countries. I intend to discuss his report with Auchinleck, Benthall and Ambedkar during the next few days, but I must have a word with Ambedkar first about the proposed transfer of responsibility to the Supply Department.

5. There is little change in the Punjab situation. Criticism of Shaukat's dismissal seems to have died down, but the Muslim League Council of Action have demanded a written explanation from Khizar of his conduct, and Khizar intends, I believe, to give them a detailed reply. Glancy is obviously worried—some of the cartoons in the Hindu newspapers are not calculated to mollify Jinnah, and some of the Muslim officials in the Punjab seem to be taking sides. Khizar must expect a crop of resignations from the Unionist Party, and Begum Shah Nawaz has informed me that she has resigned and will in future sit as an Independent Member of the Punjab Assembly. The real trial of strength will probably come at the next session of the Punjab Assembly in August. I have just had a letter from Glancy[5] of which a copy will go to you by this bag. He seems to think that Khizar may weather the storm.

* * *

7. The South African settlement is not going as smoothly as I had hoped. From a recent telegram from Shafa'at Ahmad Khan to Khare, it seems that there is some dispute as to the meaning of the agreement between Smuts and the Indian representatives at Pretoria, and some of the more extreme South Africans are taking advantage of this to make the proposed provincial legislation unpalatable to the Indians. Judging from newspaper reports some of the Indians are not behaving too well, and although Shafa'at Ahmad Khan is not yet in despair, the tone of his telegram is not cheerful.

8. I have heard nothing for a long time about the change in Bajpai's status. Caroe tells me that the official proposals setting out his functions and his relations with the Embassy in Washington and the Government of India and the Secretary of State are still under consideration at your end. I shall be grateful if you can do anything to get this matter cleared up; I wish to mention it in Council before the decision is announced.

* * *

16. My Sikkim trip was a pleasant one. Gould has great influence with the Ruling families both of Sikkim and of Bhutan, and is very popular with the young people of both families. He feels that the Central Government do not give enough importance to the Eastern Frontier and that sooner or later the status of his charge ought to be raised. The whole question of the Eastern Frontier tribes will have to be considered before very long, and Caroe has recently discussed the Assam end of the business with Clow at Shillong. From Gangtok I went to Sylhet where I saw Lentaigne, Wingate's successor, and his headquarters. Clow came down from Shillong to meet me there and seemed in quite good heart.

5 No. 503.

505

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 51

PRIVATE *10 May 1944*

999–S. Gandhi's release. When my decision was taken I was in Sikkim and Council with the exception of Thorne, Chief, Sultan Ahmed and Muhammad Usman were also absent from New Delhi on tour. Sultan Ahmed left on tour on 5th morning. Thorne consulted Chief before telegraphing to me and informed Usman of the decision before it was announced. Council on the 10th, though approving decision taken, felt that fact that they had not been consulted

had deprived them of any credit for the release though they had borne the odium of his imprisonment. They referred to your reported statement that you "left the decision to Lord Wavell." It would help if during the next India debate you could find suitable opportunity to say that the decision had the full support of the Council. I was sure of Council support when I took the decision.

506

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/193: f 141

GOVERNOR'S CAMP, CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR, *10 May 1944*

CONFIDENTIAL

No. R. 11–G.C.P.

2. The local press have joined in the chorus of approval of Gandhi's release and I should doubt whether even the most extreme die-hard could question the wisdom of that decision. One wonders now whether the old man will recover sufficiently to resume his *de facto* leadership of the Congress Party. I was rather surprised at Shukla's organ, the *Nagpur Times*, commenting as follows:—

> "It is cruel to Gandhiji that we should still saddle him with all the untold responsibilities of Indian politics without any attempt to relieve him of the burden."

In fact, there was a definite suggestion that a search should now be made for Gandhi's successor but there was no indication as to who that successor should be.

The one thing that I trust will not happen is a revival of Gandhi's weekly *Harijan*. The articles in that publication secured much publicity and were practically all calculated to poison Indo-British relations.

I should imagine, however, that recovery of strength sufficient to permit of reassumption of the leadership of the Congress is not very likely. If Gandhi is eliminated, I think we may soon be confronted with an entirely new political situation.

507

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 250

L/P&J/8/513: ff 388–9

Political Situation in India

MEMORANDUM BY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *11 May 1944*

I think that my colleagues may be interested to see the attached note by the Viceroy on the political situation in India. In a covering communication[1] the Viceroy says that this note is not intended as a final statement of his views, but rather as an indication of his present assessment of the situation as a result of six months in office.

L. S. A.

Enclosure to No. 507

NOTE ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN INDIA BY THE VICEROY, DATED APRIL 1944

1. It is quite a small percentage of India's population that takes an active, or even passive, interest in politics at any time; and the proportion is at present probably smaller than usual. The great majority of Indians are on the whole more prosperous than usual; cultivators get high prices for their grain, and many have paid off their debts and are living better than is normal with them, and labourers find little difficulty in getting employment at good wages.[2] It would probably not be wrong to say that India as a whole is in easier circumstances than for some time, though this does not mean that poverty is not still widespread and the general standard of living still deplorably low. The prestige of the "Sirkar" is probably higher than for some time; it has shown its ability to maintain law and order, and to effect some control of prices; also the war is going well.

2. The politically conscious minority comprises on the Hindu side practically all educated men and women—lawyers, doctors, those engaged in business, students and so forth. They are almost entirely supporters of Congress, which commands the support of the Press, the political machine and the purse-strings of big business. Many of their supporters realise the barren and ineffective policy of the Working Committee; but they seem to have no ideas beyond the

[1] No. 462.

[2] In Lord Wavell's original this sentence continued: 'and industrialists, contractors, etc., are making money fast.' At Mr Turnbull's suggestion these words were omitted because they were 'provocative in other connections' (presumably he meant the investigations of the War Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions). L/P&J/8/513.

release of the leaders and a return to the old factious politics and wrecking tactics of opposition. The cry for the release of the leaders is largely a matter of injured prestige, due to the sentiment that it is an insult that the "chosen of the people" should be in confinement, whatever their policy. "The people," so constantly on the lips of Congress politicians, really means little more than the high caste Hindus, though by use of the Press and the political machine they can always produce evidence of popular support. The adherents of Congress recognise that the Government still has the support of the majority of the people in the maintenance of law and order, and has the power to carry on without concession to or release of the leaders. This knowledge makes them bitter and frustrated. There is certainly a great deal of bitterness amongst the educated Hindus, which shows itself in a certain satisfaction at our military setbacks and losses, and does its best to magnify them.

The leaders themselves from their places of confinement show no sign whatever of changing their policy or wishing to co-operate. Mrs Naidu, recently released, has been quite uncompromising as to their intentions. Mr Gandhi himself maintains his attitude of injured innocence and righteous self-approval.

3. Amongst those who are not avowed supporters of Congress, or have broken away from it, there seems little or no power of leadership. The old liberals—such as Tej Bahadur Sapru, Jayakar, Maharaj Singh—do not impress me as having any constructive ideas, force of character, or ability to command a following. Rajagopalachariar is the ablest of those who have broken away from Congress, but has no following and little prospect of securing one.

Of the other parties, I know little of the Mahasabha or its leaders, but do not imagine there is much spirit of compromise or co-operation there. Dr. Ambedkar has a certain following amongst the Depressed Classes, but it is not influential. M. N. Roy is a more forcible character than most of the Indian political leaders, he has the elements of a party, and with Government support might gain more followers. But generally there is no party or leaders outside Congress and the Muslim League at present able to command any large following, or to influence elections.

4. Generally speaking, the educated Muslim class is less politically minded than the Hindu—and less educated—but the Muslim League under Jinnah is making every effort to enrol all Muslim opinion under its banner and to make it militant. Jinnah has seized the opportunity of the Congress eclipse to strengthen the position of the League, with great success. While his party is in the ascendant and growing in power, he has no intention of coming to terms with Congress and is anxious to prevent the Government doing so. It is probably for this reason that he is opposing Government in the Legislature, and he feels he may make himself strong enough to threaten Government and force it to

come to terms with him. Beyond Pakistan, I do not think he has any constructive ideas, and I doubt whether he has any clear constructive ideas about Pakistan itself. He is an ambitious politician, and does not really represent the solid conservative Muslim spirit. He has probably, however, the power to stir up a lot of trouble and the will to do so in pursuit of his ambitions.

5. There seems little prospect at present of the two main parties coming together, and even supposing they did agree to unite in forming a "National Government," I feel that it would be a "Pull devil, pull baker"[3] affair, more intent on communal advantage than on administrative efficiency and economic progress.

Is there any prospect of forming a Centre Government party, which would command popular support and a majority in the Legislature; and which would be content to concentrate on administrative problems and leave the constitutional problem to be settled gradually? I see little hope of such a party at present, but it might possibly develop. I think such a government might have to enlist the support of the Muslim League, but it would not be easy to negotiate with Jinnah except on the basis of recognising Pakistan more explicitly than the Cripps offer does. There is a sad lack of trained administrative ability in India at present, but a good deal which could be trained.

As a corollary of such a Central Government, one would presumably hope to get Coalition Governments started in Section 93 Provinces.

6. On the whole, the only policy at the moment seems to be to keep the possibility of a Working (rather than Political) National Government in mind, but to sit tight and await developments.

It is possible that the Congress leaders may make a move, though I think it is most unlikely that they will withdraw the Quit India motion;[4] they would possibly like to start an argument about the terms on which they would withdraw or modify it. But their minds are unchanged, and they are still out to wreck completely the present system, not to develop it gradually into self-government.

Jinnah may think himself strong enough to challenge Government on the Pakistan issue and demand recognition of it or the withdrawal of support from the war effort. This might be dangerous but is unlikely at present. Jinnah might also challenge Government by development of his "private army."[5]

3 A saying of unknown origin meaning to lie, cheat, and wrangle away, for one is as bad as the other.

4 Vol. II, No. 470.

5 [Note in War Cabinet Paper added by the India Office:] This refers to threats which have been made from time to time that the Muslim League would organise a force to defend its interests by force of arms if the need arise[s]. No Muslim League "private army" yet exists but there is a League organisation of "National Guards" for giving assistance in Civil Defence, and at a recent session of the Muslim League in Karachi two thousand of the guards from all parts of India dressed in grey uniform took part in a procession.

7. The combination of Congress and the Muslim League in the present session of the Legislature to defeat Government measures is largely, I think, an acknowledgment of the success of Government in maintaining law and order, tackling the food problem, keeping prices stable and, in fact, establishing itself in the minds of the people as an effective and reasonably beneficent "Sirkar".

To sum up, I am afraid I can see no clearer policy than to work towards a Central party with more popular support than the present Government, and to await events. I do not see any prospect at present of forming a body to consider the constitutional problem, whose opinions would carry any weight in India, and I do not think it worth while to attempt to do so.

Meanwhile there is an immense amount of administrative work to be done, both for the immediate present and in preparation for the future, and my Council is doing it reasonably well. It would certainly be folly to attempt to replace it until one is certain of getting a much better and more representative body.

W.

508

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *11 May 1944*
Received: 18 May

No reply yet from the President on the subject of food ships, but he has only just got back to Washington and I suppose has to discuss matters with various departments. Meanwhile your news about the prospects of the *rabi* harvest seem[s] to be a bit better. We can only hope that whatever the President is prepared to supply may at any rate fill such gap as is left. I am afraid you were not quite right in your conclusion[1] when you assumed that the 350,000 tons referred to in the telegram to the President included 100,000 tons over and above what we are already sending. Leathers put it that way in order to make it clear to the President that we had done our best and correspondingly increased the total requirement to a million tons.

2. The Conference has been going quite reasonably well and the Indian Representatives have attended the discussions on foreign affairs, on monetary and economic policy and on civil aviation and shipping. Firoz has joined in both on economic policy and on shipping. As usual he is rather sketchy and overpaints the lily when, for instance, he makes out that the continuation of Imperial Preference is the one thing that India is keen about. Similarly, addressing the Empire Parliamentary Association the other day, he drew rather too

rosy a picture of India's outlook. However, the speech went down remarkably well, and the same was true of a most spirited little speech he gave at the Prime Minister's dinner to the conference the other night.

3. I need not say that the conference, while most useful in bringing Empire Prime Ministers into contact with each other and with the war situation here, has not led to any positive conclusions. On economic matters all that can be said is that Mackenzie King would like us to go all out for a world low tariff scheme even at the cost of whittling down preference to a minimum, while Australia and New Zealand are very doubtful about the whole business; Smuts on his side pointing out that nothing is going to come of it anyway, so why [*sic*] had we not better set our own house in order. The House of Commons yesterday also damned the monetary scheme with the faintest of faint approval for an actual further continuance of discussions with America.

4. Our Representatives have not been invited to the discussions on inter-Commonwealth methods of co-operation, but there again I am not very hopeful of much in the way of results so long as Mackenzie King is in command in Canada. In an eloquent but otherwise rather empty speech this afternoon he made it clear that he does not want any progress in the direction of an Empire Secretariat, but I hope that he may at any rate yield to the other Dominions to the extent of agreeing to more regular and frequent conferences. On the future of the world there is a broad agreement that there should be some sort of world organisation to enforce peace, sub-divided into regional organisations, e.g. Europe, South America, &c., but nothing has really been thought out in any detail. My own view, for what it is worth, is that if the organisation is given actual powers of coercion, then there will be so much question of representation, of voting by unanimity, &c. that the whole thing would be paralysed as the League was before. To my mind the only solution is that the world organisation as such should be purely consultative in order to create an atmosphere of goodwill and conciliation and a moral background which would justify individual leading members like the United States, ourselves and Russia in taking coercive action on our own to preserve the peace. The whole business anyhow depends on America, Russia and ourselves maintaining an identity of outlook after the war, which seems to me to be far from assured.

5. In one of his letters Byron said "My mother-in-law has been dangerously ill; she is now dangerously well". I can only hope that that is not going to be true of our old friend Gandhi. Everybody is already reading into his release all sorts of ideas as to the beginnings of new consultations to "break the deadlock". Miss Harrison and Horace Alexander were here a few days ago to urge that you should visit Gandhi and effect a death-bed change of heart—I am not quite sure

[1] No. 490, para. 2.

whether it was yours or his that was to be effected! I am afraid, if he is well enough for consultations, it will be difficult to prevent all sorts of balloons being floated, but I cannot see what there is to be done at this moment. I am, as we have agreed by telegram,[2] circulating to the Cabinet[3] your appreciation.

6. On the other hand, to my great surprise, Winston in an expansive moment after dinner the other night said that he was not sure that it might not be possible to make another attempt at an Indian settlement in a few months' time if it could be done against the background of conclusive and indisputable victory. There is certainly everything to be said for discarding from strength and not from weakness. We did that after the Boer War with great success and perhaps the greatest mistake of the Cripps Offer was that it came immediately on top of all our disasters in the East. The expansive moment may have been transitory!

7. If there is something of the sort to be done in such a situation I still doubt whether anything much can happen while Gandhi and Jinnah are alive. The latter seems to be becoming even more tiresome in his authoritarian outlook than Gandhi. What may be possible as an interim measure is a complete Indianisation of the Council, making it as representative as you can, and on a declared intention on the part of His Majesty's Government to reduce interference to a minimum. Nothing would relieve me so much, or I believe have a greater ultimate effect in India, than if I could steadily refuse to answer parliamentary questions by saying "These are matters for the Government of India in which we do not interfere".

8. I notice in the memorandum[4] to the Sapru Conference which has just come in by mail that the Conference clamoured for restoration of Ministries in the Provinces—if necessary minority Ministries. There was very little support for that in the Executive Council when Linlithgow held an informal discussion on constitutional matters in October 1942,[5] even among the Indian Members; and apart from its obvious weaknesses it does not face the question of how a Ministry of this sort is to obtain supply or legislation. A more practical possibility is a reversion to Executive Council Government in the Provinces, but composed of non-officials as at the Centre, the Governor being given special powers to legislate and secure supply. But this involves considerable amendment of the Act for what is recognised as a temporary and inadequate solution.

[Para. 9, on a letter received from Sir B. P. Singh Roy; para. 10, containing personal comments; and para. 11, on facilities for the United Press in India, omitted.]

12. I have discussed the South African situation with Field-Marshal Smuts and while warmly thanking him for his recent intervention[6] over the Pegging Act, reminded him that that alone did not get over the difficulties or the intense

resentment in India, whether justified or not, at discrimination against the Indian race as such. More particularly, I pointed out how embarrassing it might be if Indian opinion and the Viceroy's Executive insisted on some reciprocal franchise legislation, which we could hardly refuse to implement, though it would involve legislation here and consequently the prospect of a parliamentary debate in which it would be impossible to prevent unfortunate criticisms of South Africa. He said that he was anxious to get over the first hurdle and clear up the Pegging Act situation before he did anything else; but he has in mind devising some scheme for an Indian franchise, on a communal basis, both municipally and for the purpose of representation in the South African Senate. That is as far as he can go but he believes that he can carry public opinion with him to that extent. He is anxious to be helpful so far as he can, because of his anxiety to keep India within the Empire; but he has to deal with a very unscrupulous opposition and with the intense nervousness of the white population at the idea of anything which might lead to their being politically overwhelmed in the end.

[2] Nos. 491 and 502. [3] No. 507. [4] No. 481.
[5] The informal discussion was held in August 1942; see Vol. II, Nos. 666 and 672, paras. 7 and 8 and Vol. III, Enclosure to No. 298.
[6] See No. 465, para. 7.

509

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/8/57: f 57

PRIVATE *12 May 1944*
SECRET

1010–S. Your telegram 7133[1] of March 26th. Member for Planning and Development. Dalal whom I have sounded is willing to accept appointment, and I am confident that he is most suitable choice. Viceroy's idea is that he should be responsible for preparation and presentation to Council of an all-India plan. He would use and not repeat not supplant the various departments of Government of India concerned. He would be responsible for stimulating and co-ordinating their activities and those of Provincial and States Governments. He would be vice-Chairman of Reconstruction Committee of Council and preside when I am not present. He would in the first instance take over Hutton's secretariat which may need the addition of one or two officers. Later if Hill's proposals are adopted, he would be most suitable member to take charge of centralised aspects of research. Will you please obtain King's approval to

[1] See No. 439, note 7.

appointment and inform me as soon as possible? I shall have to prepare ground with my colleagues before public announcement is made. Jones who is just taking over from Raisman agrees on financial side.

510

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *16 May 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 3rd May 1944.[1] I do not think the circulation of my political appreciation[2] to the Cabinet can do any harm, for there seems no hope of an immediate settlement of any kind. I think Twynam's solution[3] impossible, and meetings between the Governments of the Muslim majority provinces would get us nowhere.

2. Gandhi is now at Juhu, and I still cannot say what the real state of his health is. Both at Poona and at Juhu he has gone for walks and appeared in public, and his evening prayer meeting has been as popular as ever. But Iengar, the Bombay Chief Secretary, who is in close touch with Gandhi's doctors and some of his friends, has passed on some gloomy reports to the Home Department. Sarojini Naidu, who was in Poona with Gandhi, told Iengar that the doctors were seriously worried and that she intended to stand guard at Juhu and keep visitors out. It is now reported that in addition to the troubles observed by B. C. Roy and Candy, Gandhi has amœbic dysentery and possibly hookworm; and according to Iengar his friends think he is weaker, and are convinced that he needs a long rest. The first enthusiasm about his release has worn off, and although the Congress newspapers are still full of suggestions, many of them from people in England, that negotiations between Gandhi and myself are imminent, I think people are beginning to realise that his release on medical grounds was not a political stratagem. His doctors have now prescribed silence for two weeks, and we shall probably not know much more until he feels able to talk again.

3. The Punjab is still unsettled. I sent Abell, my Deputy Private Secretary, to Lahore a few days ago to have a talk with Glancy, who could not meet me without exciting a good deal of speculation. Khizar has from the first leant heavily on Glancy for advice and support. He has refused to appear in person before the Muslim League Council of Action, and Liaqat Ali Khan who is

conducting the proceedings against him, has acknowledged his written reply, and given him another week to explain himself further. I doubt if the League are happy about the Punjab, but Khizar seems unwilling to come out with a bold statement which would take the wind out of their sails. He could say with perfect truth that he believes in Pakistan, and that Pakistan must be built up on a Punjab in which the Sikhs and Hindus are contented and co-operative. With Khizar unwilling to take a bold line, the fate of the Unionist Party is likely to depend on minor manœuvres. The League probably hoped to make a lot of Shaukat's dismissal, but his colleagues in the Punjab Cabinet seem to be in a position to prove that apart from the case on which the Governor acted, he had abused his position as a Minister . . . [personal reference omitted] . . . The League may therefore not wish to say very much more about him. On the other hand, Khizar, with the reluctant support of his non-Muslim colleagues, has secured the appointment of two influential Muslims to the Cabinet, one in place of Shaukat and the other as additional Minister. Both these new Ministers—Jamal Khan Leghari, a Baluch Tumandar, and Nawab Ashiq Hussain of Multan, have a strong following in the Western Punjab, and by taking them into the Cabinet, Khizar has probably reduced the number of desertions from the Unionist Party from 30 to 18. He still has some Parliamentary Secretaryships up his sleeve, and, unless he loses his nerve, is quite likely to pull through.

4. Lewis is having some trouble in Orissa with Parlakimedi, his Premier, who is a very pleasant fellow but spends nearly all his time gadding about India or on his country estate. There is some talk of a Cabinet reconstruction, but it may come to nothing. In any case Parlakimedi is not likely to be unseated.

5. There is nothing fresh to report about food. I am still waiting for final information about imports. Rowlands is sending Monteath, as an enclosure to one of his weekly letters, a note by Clauson, who, during a recent visit to Bengal on other business, was shown round the Friends' Ambulance Unit by Symonds, the chief organiser. Clauson's impression was that although conditions must have improved very greatly since last year, local scarcities may occur during the summer. He thought the official attitude more complacent than the facts seemed to justify. The Friends' Ambulance Unit is doing excellent work, but like all voluntary concerns, can cover only a comparatively small part of the field. Symonds lunched with me today, together with Vail, an American representative of the Friends. Symonds was inclined to be pessimistic but admitted he worked in the worst districts and had only a limited view. Casey has taken firm hold of the situation, and although he appreciates all the difficulties, he is fairly confident of getting through the summer without serious

[1] No. 494. [2] Enclosure to No. 507. [3] See Enclosure to No. 462.

trouble. He is now working out a long-term scheme for procurement which will be more methodical and involve closer control than the present scheme.

I have not yet been able to send you a final telegram about the third wheat forecast as the reports from the Provinces concerned are not complete. But I understand that the Punjab, the U.P., and Sind, took no account of the special damage in their returns, though the C.P. probably did so.

I am trying to get the "Grow More Food" campaign extended and put on a firmer footing. Agriculture is being separated from the other subjects in the Education, Health and Lands Department, and Kharegat, the Vice-Chairman of the Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, is being appointed Additional Secretary for Agriculture alone. He does not impress me as a thruster. The Department received a shock a few days ago when the final forecast for cotton came in. As you know we had succeeded in making a considerable reduction in the area under short-staple cotton, amounting in all to something like 5 million acres. The final forecast showed, without preliminary warning, that nearly one-fourth of this idea [? area] was under short-staple cotton again, mainly in the Indian States. The present proposal is that we aim at a reduction of 30% in the area under short-staple cotton; but it is too late this year to apply compulsion all over the country, and we must leave it to Provincial Governments to decide how far they can go. The Bombay Government are about to regulate the area in each holding to be sown with food crops, and Madras are likely to follow suit. In other provinces much will depend on the dates on which the various money crops are sown.

6. I hope to hear shortly that the King has approved the selection of Dalal as my new Member for Planning and Development. I have let you know[4] in reply to your telegram[5] on the subject that I did not, in sounding Dalal, put to him the convention under which Members of Council divest themselves of their active business interests. He must know all about this, as when Mody was appointed the arrangements were undoubtedly discussed by Tata's Board. I thought that a reference to the convention would come more appropriately when I was in a position to make a formal offer to Dalal. He does not want to take over until 1st August, as he needs some weeks to settle his affairs and has been advised to take a course of medical treatment for some digestive trouble. But it would have a good effect politically if we could announce as soon as possible that the Department will be established on the 1st August and that Dalal will be in charge of it.

I see that the Bombay Plan is to come out in the Penguin Series.[6] Gregory, who takes criticisms very much to heart, thought we should at once produce a rival pamphlet and broadcast it through the India Office. I doubt if this would be a success; but we are getting Holburn of *The Times* to write a special article about the progress made by the Government of India with planning and

development, and I do not think we can go beyond something of this kind. I see that the *Economist* has had another article on the Bombay Plan pointing out that there are a good many fallacies in it.

* * *

11. Khare is still discussing with me the selection of a High Commissioner for Australia. He is likely to be cautious as he needs a really good man to replace Shafa'at Ahmad Khan in South Africa next November, and Australia is therefore likely to get his second string. I am relieved to hear that Mackenzie King is having difficulty in finding a good man for India, as this makes our own delay about Australia more understandable. It is at present difficult to get eminent Indians to accept appointments abroad, and there are very few first-class men available.

12. I had a talk with Aney a few days ago about affairs in Ceylon, and also received a deputation from the Ceylon Indian Merchants Chamber. The Indians in Ceylon have several grievances. They are worried about the new constitution which, they suspect, will take no account of Indian interests and may be sanctioned by His Majesty's Government without adequate discussion with us. They also say that the Ceylon Government have taken advantage of the war to put Indian traders out of business. The tendency is apparently to requisition and distribute imported goods through Government co-operative stores, and such Indian merchants as are allowed to import from India have their profits arbitrarily cut. Apart from this commercial grievance arising from war, there is the background of resentment about the political rights of Indians in Ceylon and the dispute about the employment of Indian labour. With goodwill on both sides I think the commercial grievance could be dealt with. It would be a comparatively simple matter for us to nominate Indian exporters in India, and for the Ceylon Government to nominate importers, including a fair number of Indians, in Ceylon, and to regulate trade and prices in a way satisfactory to both sides. But if, as the Indians contend, the Ceylon Government have ulterior motives we are likely to drift into an open dispute. There is already some talk of stopping Indian exports to Ceylon until the Ceylon Government behave in a more reasonable manner. This brings me to your recent telegram[7] about the supply of Indian labour for rubber production in Ceylon. With feeling as it is now, I could not intervene with any hope of success. If the Ceylon Government ask for help and are

4 and 5 Not printed.

6 This Memorandum referred to in No. 344, note 4 was published by Penguin Books Ltd. at Harmondsworth in May 1944.

7 442 of 15 May. L/P&J/8/205.

reasonable about terms, my Council would agree, but not otherwise. Khare has gone as far as he dares in allowing organised Indian labour units to go to Ceylon for works of military importance.

13. I have no further official news from South Africa; but according to newspaper reports, Indian agitation against the Pretoria settlement is gaining ground, and the settlement may be condemned by extremists on both sides. If so, we shall be back where we were and must expect demands from Council for economic action against the Union.

I wonder if you have been able to say a word to Mackenzie King about Indians in British Columbia. I suggested that you should in my telegram No. 767–S[8] of 15th April.

* * *

15. Madame Chiang Kai-shek's plans for a visit to India have given us a good deal of trouble. From Seymour's latest telegram[9] it seems likely that the whole business is off and that she will not come to India at all. I hope you will be able to restrain the Maharaja from returning to Kashmir immediately. I am sorry he does not like war-time London. Firoz has been writing me some enthusiastic personal letters, and is obviously much interested both in his Cabinet work and in meeting old friends on social occasions.

16. I have your letter[10] about the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, and expect advice from Asoka Roy about it within the next few days. It would certainly be embarrassing if we went ahead with the parliamentary legislation only to have the whole idea ridiculed by a combination of the Congress and the Muslim League in the Legislative Assembly here.

17. I have been trying for some time without much success to introduce various concessions for civil officials who are hard hit both by the difficulty of getting home leave and by the rise in cost of living in India. The Home Department, in their telegram No. 4063,[11] dated the 7th April, 1944, have recommended to you the grant to members of the Secretary of State's services during the war of additional periods of leave on average pay to enable them to take short leave more frequently in India. I shall be grateful if the Home Department can be informed of your decision as soon as possible. We have been moving at a snail's pace, and although the services on the whole are uncomplaining, there is no doubt that a good many married officers are much worse off than they used to be, and are taking far too little leave.

* * *

19. You may be interested in the statements about crime which I am enclosing in this bag. The following figures for the provinces where the increase in crime since 1938 has been the largest show that the matter is serious:—

Increase in 1943 as compared with 1933–37 averages

	Murder	Dacoity	Robbery	Burglary
	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.	per cent.
All-India ...	+ 40 ,,	+ 402 ,,	+ 62 ,,	+ 32 ,,
Bombay ...	+ 162 ,,	+ 865 ,,	+ 231 ,,	+ 166 ,,
Bengal ...	+ 86 ,,	+ 556 ,,	+ 150 ,,	+ 65 ,,
Bihar ...	+ 53 ,,	+ 782 ,,	+ 86 ,,	+ 62 ,,
Orissa ...	+ 58 ,,	+ 2,510 ,,	+ 162 ,,	+ 150 ,,
Sind ...	+ 115 ,,	+ 643 ,,	+ 224 ,,	+ 56 ,,

There has been a tendency recently for the Government of India to get out of touch with the crime situation in the provinces and Thorne has agreed that we must remedy this. We shall now get quarterly returns for the more important crimes from the provinces and will compare the state of crime with the figures for the corresponding period in the previous year and with the pre-war quinquennial average.

* * *

21. My wife and I are going to Naini Tal on 24th May to spend a few days with the Halletts. I expect to be in Simla in June for the inside of three weeks. I am not sure yet what my movements after that will be, but I may visit one or two States in July. In August I hope to hold another Governors' Conference, and I may put in a short tour as well. My Hyderabad visit, which seems to need much more arranging than anything else, is now being postponed until the end of October. I had hoped to put it in August, but what with the Ramzan and the uncertainty of the weather for flying, it seems best to postpone it until I can be reasonably sure that there will be no changes of plan.

[8] L/PO/10/18.

[9] Unnumbered of 13 May to Sir E. Jenkins repeated to Foreign Office as No. 361. In this tel., Sir H. Seymour reported Madame Chiang Kai-shek as having told him she felt it would be impossible to take her intended rest-cure in Kashmir before the middle of June by which time Kashmir might be too hot. Nonetheless, Sir H. Seymour felt it might be useful if some cool venue in India could be suggested. L/P&S/12/783.

[10] Dated 5 May and asking Lord Wavell whether, in the light of his view that there could well be a decisive non-official majority against the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of the Federal Court, it would be justifiable to proceed with the matter. L/P&J/8/458.

[11] L/S&G/File 3653 of 1944.

511

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *18 May 1944*
Received: 27 May

The Empire Conference is over. I don't think I need add much to what I said in my letter of May 11th.[1] From the point of view of personal contacts and the current conduct of the war it has, I think, been very successful. From the point of view of future Empire organisation it has not been possible to do much owing to Mackenzie King's resolute refusal to discuss anything or commit himself until he has discussed matters with his Cabinet at Ottawa, which is only another way of saying that he wants to evade issues which he finds uncomfortable. All the same it is possible that some improvement in consultation and co-operation, at any rate on defence questions, may arise and there was general agreement that it would be a useful thing for the Prime Minister to meet the High Commissioners once a month in addition to the daily meeting which they have with the Dominions Secretary. In that connection it is now suggested that Bruce should drop out of the War Cabinet meetings, which leaves the Indian representatives the only ones outside British Ministers and Chiefs of Staff. That renders their position somewhat anomalous, but on the other hand it would seem hardly worth while their staying here in order to meet the Prime Minister once a month. Eventually, of course, the status of the Indian High Commissioner here would have to be raised and then he could attend with the others. I have only just seen this suggestion about the elimination of Bruce from the War Cabinet and must think further as to what consequences we should draw from the Indian point of view. I may very possibly have to telegraph to you before long.

2. I received a deputation yesterday headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury[2] and including every kind of eminent churchman and representative of missionary bodies, asking for some solution of the political deadlock on the ground of the increasing bitterness in India. I pointed out that the bitterness was by no means universal but mainly confined to the educated Hindu world. More generally I pointed out the difficulties of doing anything at this moment and my hope that presently, what with the increasing interest in things like the Bombay Plan, the atmosphere of victory and the realisation that the post-war side of the Cripps proposals was in reach, the situation would be eased and a more realistic frame of mind prevail. Since then I have had the usual questions in Parliament[3] as to whether Gandhi's release would not afford an opportunity

for breaking the deadlock and have refused to be drawn beyond saying that the matter was one within your own judgment of the situation.

[Para. 3, on the Government of Bombay's refusal to sanction the disaffiliation of Sophia College, omitted.]

4. A deputation of the Parliamentary Medical Group has just been to see me. They were anxious, in general terms, to express their warm support of the idea which Hill has already put forward, of a really effective Central Medical Research Institution at Delhi. They expressed the view that funds for this might come not only from Government as part of the work of reconstruction but also from private donors in British India and the States and also from the Empire outside as a testimony to India's war achievement.

They also came with a more particular immediate suggestion and that is that the hospitals here would be willing to offer to find places as house surgeons and otherwise immediately after the war for up to 100 Indian Medical Officers who have done really well and whom the Government of India would recommend as likely to benefit by their experience here. They have discussed this with the College of Surgeons and the College of Physicians who are prepared to make arrangements for that number if notified reasonably soon of the Government of India's acceptance of the idea. It would be, of course, for the Government of India actually to pay their expenses. I raised the question whether licentiate officers could be included and was told that these were not authorised to practise in this country and that there might be difficulties from that point of view in making them house surgeons, but that they thought the difficulty might be overcome in the case of men who had shown outstanding quality, more particularly, perhaps, in such fields as pathology. Their whole idea is that the initiative should come from this end as a token of the British Medical profession's goodwill towards India, and not as a request from the Government of India; but I pointed out that it would be advisable for me informally and privately to ascertain your views as to the feasibility of this before indicating to the College of Physicians and the College of Surgeons my own view that such an initiative would be welcomed. I should add that Hill told me that he had discussed this matter with General Hance just before leaving, who thought the idea feasible and was entirely in favour of it. I am not sure whether Hill said that it originated with Hance or with himself.

[Para. 5, on Sir D. Pilditch's retirement, omitted.]

1 No. 508.

2 A letter from the Archbishop of Canterbury dated 8 May 1944 asking whether Mr Amery would be willing to meet a deputation from the British Council of Churches is on L/P&J/8/513. The Archbishop's letter enclosed a resolution on the Indian situation which had been passed at a meeting of the British Council of Churches on 25 April 1944.

3 By Mr Shinwell. *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 400, 18 May 1944, col. 327.

6. I have been interested to read your Political Adviser's note[4] of March 8th, giving you his opinion with regard to our relations with Hyderabad. The line he suggests you should take with the Nizam seems to be the right one. It is good news that His Exalted Highness has agreed to allow two of the most decrepit members of his Council to retire during the next year or 18 months; and no doubt it will be considered whether means can be devised to bring more fresh blood into that body without raising constitutional issues. Another question which it might be well to examine is whether, if His Exalted Highness were to die, it would be possible to give his successor a freer hand, or indeed practicable to do otherwise.

7. I shall be sending you a telegram[5] in the next few days in answer to your question[6] as to what line it is best to take with the States when you meet them. I won't go into the details of this, but broadly speaking it is for them to realise that the more soundly based their position, both economically and politically in their several States, the better will be their position for negotiating terms for entry into a future Indian constitution or, in the alternative, for staying outside. I am sure it is all to our interest to encourage the prosperity of the States and not to take too narrow a view of things where their interests and those of British India tend to conflict. I have a feeling that we have been inclined to do so in the past. On the other hand I gather from Raisman that the difference of levels of taxation and the opportunities for blackmarketing are giving the States a very good time just at present. It is to my mind by no means inconceivable that if a completely self-governing British India pursued a narrow economic tendency, British firms might be tempted to set up in State territory and the States receive a new impetus in their development.

8. All this refers of course to the States that are capable of an economic policy and not to the smaller fry who ought somehow or other to be amalgamated or absorbed, whether by their neighbours or by British India. In that connection there are obvious difficulties in the way of your suggesting to the Princes at large that they should absorb their smaller neighbours, especially as a deputation from the Chamber might include probable absorbees. But I wonder whether it might not be possible for you privately to convey to Kashmir, for instance, some hint that he might try his hand at buying out some of his neighbours among the Punjab Hill States, possibly in return for his giving us a freer hand over Chitral.

9. On the question of the States federating as a separate dominion, there is of course no logical answer if they say that what Cripps conceded to Provinces cannot be denied to the States. The real answer lies, quite apart from the unlikelihood of their ever agreeing to a joint federation of States, in the economic and geographical character such a union would possess. On the other hand, I see no reason why, from the point of view of future bargaining, or

from that of forming constituent elements in a future Indian Federation, big compact groups like the Kathiawar or Rajputana States should not each form some sort of entity *vis-à-vis* British India. Again, if there is to be anything in the nature of a regrouping of the Provinces into major entities such as Coupland or Sikander have suggested, it may well be that a good many of the minor States would fit inside the enlarged Provinces, while others would, either individually, like Hyderabad or Kashmir, or in combined groups, form separate elements in the new Constitution, or alternatively stay out under the Crown Representative.

10. In any case, I wish it were possible to encourage the States to think a little more of the general constitutional future of India and a little less about their own position. It seems to me that if they took a bigger view they might very well give a lead to the whole constitutional discussions, or even initiate them themselves and in that way strengthen their position for the future.

[4] A copy of the relevant paras. of this note is on L/P&S/13/1209. Sir F. Wylie suggested that no important changes should be made in the organisation of the Nizam's Executive Council during the war.

[5] In the event Mr Amery sent a letter; see No. 513. [6] See No. 467.

512

Sir J. Colville (Bombay) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/165: ff 170–1

CONFIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE, BOMBAY, *19 May 1944*

Report No. 22

3. *Release of Gandhi.* This has certainly been the event of the fortnight, and, as one would expect in this part of the country, it has overshadowed other interests. The reception has, as one expected, been very good, though many people did not, at first, believe that he was really ill and are only now realising this. He has had enough energy, however, to pay a visit to the fire area, which he drove round for over an hour yesterday! I gather that that is true of Gandhi himself, who at last has realised that the various doctors who attended him had genuine cause for concern. I have met one or two people who have seen him: Nagindas Master, the Mayor, and Nanjee, the President of the Indian Merchants' Chamber. The Mayor asked me particularly to convey to you the high appreciation which he felt for your action in releasing Gandhi, and his view that it would produce a "break in the clouds". He said that Gandhi was undoubtedly much more frail than people realised, but that his strong will would pull him through. He also said that he thought that Gandhi would shortly attempt to get into touch with Jinnah, and later with yourself. . . .

513

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&S/13/981: ff 143–8

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *22 May 1944*

My dear Wavell,

I am very glad to have your letter of the 20th April, No. F. 681(2)-G.G. 43,[1] and to know broadly how your mind is moving among the very complex problems presented by our pledges to the Indian States, by our present relations with them and by what seems to be their inevitable destiny. I agree with you that sooner or later the Princes have got to face squarely and in open discussion with us the issues for them resulting from our solemn commitment to give full self-government to British India. I also agree that our existing commitments to 582 separate Indian rulers are impossible to reconcile in any practical sense with the future as we see it for India as a whole. I agree therefore that our main objective must be to assist the rulers by all means at our disposal to integrate their territories and peoples with the new All-India structure in whatever form in which it may eventually emerge and in such manner as may best preserve their heritage.

2. As you say, the moment has not yet come for a full and frank discussion with the Princes of all the implications involved; while wiser heads among them and their advisers are no doubt fully conscious that the treaties cannot ultimately halt the march of events, the Princes as a whole, so long as there is no sign of accord in British India on the form of the new constitution nor any practical scheme for embodying the Indian States within it, must be expected to continue to base themselves on their relations with the Crown and on the protection these afford them in the enjoyment of their existing powers and privileges. On the other hand, I realise that you cannot postpone some discussion with the Chancellor and his associates on current questions: and you will be meeting the Princes with some formality for the first time. The immediate matter then for consideration is what line can most usefully be taken with those present on that occasion.

3. I am broadly in agreement with what you propose in paragraph 7 of your letter to say, or rather not to say, to them. I quite agree that the less we say about treaties the better, and in any case that there should be no departure from the formula which with Cabinet approval was used in paragraph 2 of Craik's letter of the 4th January 1943 to the Pro-Chancellor.[2] As to what, if anything, it would be opportune to say to the Princes on this occasion about the constitutional issue, I do not myself think we can say outright that a union of all the States is not, at any rate in theory, a possible conception; but the practical

difficulties are, of course, formidable, if not insuperable. What we have got to get the States—and, I think I should add, to help the States—to consider is the problem of the ways and means by which a greater political integration among them—or groups of them—could be made practically possible, with the ultimate object of getting them to work out the machinery for association with or incorporation into an All-India Union (or lesser Unions). But so long as the general tendency is to stand on the treaty position, no mixed body of Princes whom you meet at the present juncture are likely to be openly receptive of advice on how they should accommodate themselves to what remains for them a hypothetical situation. It is for you to judge whether there is anything that can usefully be said upon this issue and I am content to accept your view that this is not the time and place.

4. At the same time, while going on with our schemes of attachment and co-operation, we cannot, I feel sure, afford to let the implications for States of the major constitutional issues just lie over until insufficient time is left for their mature consideration. My view on the tactics which might be pursued is broadly as follows. We should take whatever opportunity offers to press on the more important States the necessity for a rationalisation of the whole of the present lay-out of the States' system so that the Rulers may be in a strong position when the time comes to bargain with British Indian units. Some of the largest States may, as you say, be able to stand on their own feet when that process begins; the medium States will certainly have to combine in some way or other; and both will have to contribute to the problem of getting rid of the troublesome tail of the smaller States. To meet this last difficulty the larger States might well be encouraged to set about devising suitable plans and terms for the merger by consent—even if it is consent under some degree of suasion—of their smaller neighbours which can certainly look forward to no future in isolation. It may indeed be desirable sooner or later to encourage Provinces similarly to consider what terms they might offer to some of the States whose future clearly lies in absorption into British India rather than into a larger State. (On that last point, it is perhaps rather unfortunate as things are now developing that the long association of certain States and groups of States with Provincial authorities has broken since the last war with the result of making it more difficult than might have been the case to facilitate their incorporation into British India.)

5. I hope you will be getting your department to turn their minds to working out in some detail the practical issues involved in preparing the States to fit into the picture envisaged in paragraph 6 of your letter, the general features of which closely correspond with what I myself hope to see. I think that there would be nothing incompatible with the policy of His Majesty's Government

[1] No. 467. [2] See Vol. III, No. 309, note 4.

as indicated in our reply to the Jam Sahib's letter[3] in a move forward now towards progressive merger of smaller States by mutual consent either in the bigger States or in the Provinces. That their consent is required to enable us to alter the relationship of States with the Crown is a point which the Princes have recently stressed[4] in recording their views—albeit in some degree based on misunderstanding—about certain features of the Attachment Scheme, and there is much force in what Linlithgow observed on this subject in the concluding paragraphs of his letter to me of the 13th September last, No. 22/H.E.,[5] where he summed up his views on the States' future. I cannot, however, believe that the bigger States as well as some of the Provinces would be incapable of appreciating the practical advantages which would accrue to them in having offered betimes to and had accepted by the Rulers of small States generous terms of merger,—or conversely the Rulers of such States themselves of appreciating the salvation afforded by acceptance of such terms as would save their dignity and assure the future of their families,—before the increasing pressure of economic and political factors creates conditions of instability in these small units fatal to themselves and harmful to their neighbours and to India as a whole.

6. Your Political officers may find opportunities to stimulate discreetly consideration of these possibilities among some of the big States who would be able to afford generous terms for merger of their smaller neighbours. They might eventually assist in mediating fair settlements between the parties. Possibly also they might find occasion to bring home to Rulers of medium States the advantages which they too would eventually obtain in collective bargaining if they now instituted closer relations with their neighbours of similar calibre, ideally to the pitch of sharing the administrative burdens which affect them in common. A third possibility is that the numerous States which in the past were in political relations through Provincial Governments might be encouraged now to contract further administrative arrangements with the existing Provincial Governments of mutual benefit to the parties on the lines of what has been begun in the Eastern States Agency. In such ways, alternative to attachment or grouping, some immediate progress might be secured towards creating better administrative conditions for the inhabitants of the smaller States, while the spade work would have been begun towards assisting the States, as you propose in paragraph 6 of your letter, to join an All-India or more than one Indian Federation on terms securing to them much of the political stability and possibly a greater economic well-being than they now enjoy by treaty. This seems to me a possible line of immediate advance on which I shall be glad in due course to have your considered views.

7. The above of course are no more than tentative suggestions on which there is much room for difference of opinion. I do not suggest that it would be

opportune to bring them into discussion when you receive the Chancellor and his fellow Princes. Indeed, I should expect the Princely delegation to be more disposed to raise with you on this occasion certain of the points arising on the Attachment and Co-operative Grouping schemes which they have recently discussed in the Standing Committee of the Chamber with your Political Adviser. If my surmise is right I have no doubt that you would in reply abide by the general line proposed in paragraph 5 of your telegram 2700–P[6] of 11th December. I think it is agreed that co-operative grouping has in some of the Agencies attained marked success, although I have noticed in recent correspondence from Residents comment corroborating the view of Wylie that this is by itself no sovereign remedy for the ills of small States.

8. With reference to your last paragraph, you will probably have seen by the time this reaches you the note[7] prepared here on the mediatisation of the German States which has now been sent to Wylie. It is of much interest in itself, but contributes very little to the solution of the Indian States problem, the essential point of difference being that in the case of the German States there were no guarantees of protection, integrity, etc., given by the Paramount Power such as constitute so embarrassing a difficulty for us in India.

Yours sincerely,

L. S. AMERY

[3] Vol. II, No. 115. [4] See No. 395. [5] No. 111. [6] No. 264.
[7] See No. 467, note 9.

514

Sir E. Bridges to Sir D. Monteath

L/PO/6/111: f 33

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET, GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W.I.

23 May 1944

Dear Monteath,

Your Secretary of State will have seen the minutes of the meeting of Dominion Prime Ministers on the 15th May,[1] at which Mr. Curtin handed in a paper on Improvements in the Machinery for Empire Co-operation desired by the Australian Government.

The Prime Minister has now sent a letter to Mr. Curtin saying that he is ready to fall in with the suggestion that there shall be monthly meetings at which he, the Prime Minister, and the Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs would meet the High Commissioners of the Dominions and give them a review of the current situation and problems.

[1] Not printed.

The Prime Minister continued in his letter as follows:

"I recognise that, as you say, this arrangement would make it unnecessary for Mr. Bruce, who has been the accredited representative of the Government of Australia for over two years, to attend meetings of the War Cabinet regularly."

It remains to consider the position of the Indian representatives at the War Cabinet. The Maharaja of Kashmir and Sir Firoz Khan Noon were invited to this country for a visit which would coincide with the meeting with Dominion Prime Ministers and might last for another month. Obviously there can be no question of interference with the expectations on which they were invited—namely, that they would attend the meetings of the War Cabinet during this period.

As regards the future, the Prime Minister assumes that the Government of India and the India Office would probably not invite further representatives to come over here on the same terms—namely, attendance at the Monday meetings. Perhaps, however, this need not be laid down in black and white; and, just as Dominion Prime Ministers and very senior Dominion Ministers when visiting this country are in practice invited, as an act of courtesy, to attend the Monday meetings, so there will be nothing to prevent a distinguished Indian Minister[2] who happens to be in London from being invited to attend a meeting of the War Cabinet on some particular occasion, should this be deemed appropriate.

As you will see, there is nothing in this which calls for any immediate or hard and fast decision. But I thought it would be appropriate to take this opportunity to get the matter put on record. I expect you would wish your Secretary of State to be aware of the general lines the Prime Minister has taken in this matter.

Yours sincerely,

E. E. BRIDGES

[2] Sir D. Monteath noted here: 'Sir E. B. no doubt means an *Indian* Member of the G.-G.'s Council, not either a Provincial Minister nor an I.C.S. or other official Member such as Sir J. Raisman.'

515

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *23 May 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 11th May 1944.[1] I am writing earlier than usual this week as I am leaving for my visit to Hallett at Naini Tal on the

morning of Wednesday, the 24th, and my letter must be signed before I go if it is to catch Thursday's bag.

2. There is nothing much to report about food. I have had your private telegram[2] saying that there is still no reply from the President and that a reminder is being considered. Council on Wednesday, the 17th, approved the proposal referred to in paragraph 5 of my last letter[3] for a reduction of 30% in the area under short staple cotton. Members agreed that it was too late to insist on all-India compulsion and that Provincial Governments must be left to do what they could. The Bombay Government are involved in a dispute with the Food Department about their price policy for foodgrains under their new scheme for the compulsory regulation of farming. The Bombay contention is that they must announce that the present controlled prices will be the "floor prices" for the different food crops under their scheme, presumably to hold good for a year ahead. The Food Department would like to be more cautious, and Colville is sending Knight, the Adviser concerned, up here for a discussion. There is no doubt that with compulsion there must be some undertaking by Government to support the market, and the question is whether we should commit ourselves now to prices which are admittedly high, or allow for a reasonable reduction.

3. I am not surprised that the Premiers' Conference has not produced any positive conclusions. I did not think very much of the final statement, it was practically pure wool, and attracted little attention in the Indian press. Firoz seems to retain his enthusiasm, and the last bag brought me three letters from him. His views on matters such as shipping and Foreign policy are, I am sure, a good deal more conservative than those of most of his colleagues in Council, and would be regarded with horror by most Indian politicians. But he is a cheerful person, and in spite of his laziness in getting up his briefs and a tendency to play to the gallery at times, he does now and then bring some robust commonsense into our Council discussions.

4. Gandhi seems now certainly on the mend though I doubt if he could yet be described as "dangerously well". He has visited the Bombay docks and the fire area, though I believe he did not get out of his car during the trip. He is reported to have seen his first "talkie", and to be going to break his silence on Saturday, 27th May. The Nationalist newspapers are talking of negotiations between him and Jinnah, but Jinnah is in Kashmir and is unlikely to return until the end of June. He has so far said nothing, and Congress hopes are based on some rather silly statements by Allama Mashriqi, the head of the Khaksars. It is difficult to see why the half cracked Allama should be a successful broker between Gandhi and Jinnah. The Muslim League do not like the Khaksars, one of whose members assaulted Jinnah last year. Nor can Jinnah

[1] No. 508. [2] 455 of 19 May. L/PO/10/18. [3] No. 510.

have been pleased by the enthusiastic support of the Congress press for the establishment of an All-India Muslim Majlis as a counterblast to the League. Gandhi is said to be going to see Jayakar, but there is no hope of anything constructive from that quarter. I have just heard that Colville has received a proposal through the President of the Bombay Legislative Council that Gandhi should visit him at Poona before returning to Wardha. According to the President the visit would be a personal call to which no publicity would be given. I shall advise Colville not to receive him, it *will* receive publicity whatever they say, and I do not think we need give Gandhi gratuitous advertisement.

I am interested in what you say in paragraph 6 of your letter about Winston's views on a possible further attempt to settle the Indian problem. I agree with you that as long as Gandhi and Jinnah are in the lead there is little likelihood of a settlement or of anything constructive being done.

5. I am having the Gandhi correspondence printed. Part of it—I think all the letters exchanged before the fast and the very long letter to Linlithgow—had already been printed once.[4] The complete series will make a respectable volume which will not be ready for about ten days. Gandhi has released to the press the letter he wrote to Jinnah in May 1943.[5] I gather that there was a good deal of discussion between him and his intimates about releasing other letters, particularly a defeatist report by Miss Slade on conditions in Orissa when a Japanese invasion was expected.[6] But no decisions were reached, and Gandhi may write to me or the Home Department before doing anything more. The Jinnah letter caused little excitement, and Muslim League comment on it was not encouraging.

* * *

9. I mentioned Dalal's appointment as Member for Planning in Council today.[7] Srivastava is, in the words of P. G. Wodehouse, "If not disgruntled, certainly not very gruntled", but I think on the whole the appointment will be well received.

Holburn's special article for *The Times*,[8] which I mentioned in paragraph 6 of my last letter, was telegraphed home a few days ago. He showed it to me in draft, and I thought it quite good. The Information and Broadcasting Department will send your publicity people a short brief covering much the same ground as Holburn's article. This may be of some use if friendly editors want guidance in dealing with the Bombay Plan.

* * *

13. I hope to reply shortly to your separate letter[9] about the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court and the connected parliamentary legislation. Asoka Roy's view is that if public opinion is to be ascertained here and the matter is to be discussed in the Indian Legislature before you make any

approach to your colleagues with a view to legislation in Parliament, we must have the text of a draft Bill which you are prepared to accept. He feels that attempts to ascertain public opinion or to promote discussion in the Legislature on the basis of an outline would lead to very little. There can be intelligent criticism of the proposals only if people are shown exactly what they are going to be. I mentioned this case in Council today, and Council agreed with Asoka Roy. The reply to your letter will therefore take his point, and I hope you will be able to agree. So much work has been put in at both ends on the drafting of the Bill (I understand that no Order-in-Council will now be needed) that it would not take very long to knock it into final shape.

14. Khare's selection for the High Commissionership is Sir R. P. Paranjpye who, though he is over 66, is still hale and hearty. I had a talk with him on 22nd May. I think he will do it all right, though I would have preferred a younger man. But he seems alert and he is keen to take the job, and he has a distinguished record.

Shafa'at Ahmad Khan has sent a rather more hopeful telegram about the position in South Africa. Agitation in the Indian Press against the Pretoria settlement goes on; but according to Shafa'at Ahmad Khan, it seems likely that the more stable Indian elements in the Union will come to some final agreement with the Union Government.

[4] See Vol. III, Nos. 411 and 454. [5] See Vol. III, No. 692.
[6] Presumably Vol. III, Enclosure 1 to No. 296.
[7] In tel. 1070–S of 19 May, Lord Wavell had informed Mr Amery that Sir Ardeshir Dalal had accepted the appointment. In tel. 478 of 27 May, Mr Amery conveyed the King's formal approval.
[8] Published on 31 May and headed 'New Vistas in India.'
[9] See No. 510, note 10.

516

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/247: ff 82–3

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL BARNES COURT, SIMLA, *23 May 1944*

No. 508–F.L.

2. The situation as regards the League campaign against the Unionists is calmer for the time being. I should very much like to have come to Delhi for a day or two and given you an account of what has been happening, but I came to the same conclusion as Your Excellency that my visit would give rise to another flood of rumours. However, Abell will have given you his impressions by now; his visit to Lahore was in every way most welcome. Khizar has certainly done well in resisting Jinnah's wanton attacks on the Unionist Fort, but he is

very obviously feeling the strain, as is indeed only natural; he has gone off to his home for a few days and should soon arrive at Simla where he will, I hope, find life less harrowing than at Lahore. The League Committee of Action have not yet decided what penalty should be inflicted on Khizar for his refusal to make an abject surrender to the Qaid-i-Azam. They have called on the Premier again for his explanation and have tried to brush aside as an irrelevant evasion his question as to whether the Sikander-Jinnah Pact[1] is still in force; seeing that Khizar like other Muslim Unionists subscribed to the League on the express condition that this was subject to the terms of the Pact, his question would appear to be extremely pertinent and by no means easy to answer. Khizar's ex-communication from the League is not now regarded as an absolute certainty, but it is difficult to see any other eventual conclusion. One thing that he seems to have realised is that it would be the height of folly for him to appear in person at Delhi, and, even if the League Committee should advance on Lahore, as they threaten to do, I hope he will content himself with long-range firing.

3. The Unionist Party are setting to work to build up a political organization of their own. They have a great deal of leeway to make up, as their overwhelming majority in the Assembly and the absence of any serious opposition had lulled them into a deep and tranquil slumber. However, if they get to work in real earnest, I think they should be able to counteract the activities of Jinnah and his friends in nearly all rural constituencies. The position has been steadied not a little by the appointment of Nawab Sir Jamal Khan and Nawab Ashiq Husain to the Cabinet. The increase in the number of Ministers from six to seven is to be regretted in many ways, but it is a small price to pay compared with what might have happened. There have been some protests in the non-Muslim papers against the inflation of Muhammadan representation on the Cabinet, but Hindus and Sikhs have on the whole realised the position and taken things with commendable calmness. Hopes have been expressed that the arrangement made is only a temporary expedient. There is a possibility that the Education Minister, Mian Abdul Haye, who has not been keeping good health of late, may fade out of the picture before long and that the numbers may in this way be restored to the normal. This would result in the rather strange situation of every Muslim Minister being a Nawab, since Khizar succeeds now to the hereditary title held by his father.

* * *

5. Congress-minded Hindus continue to build exaggerated hopes on Gandhi's release. Sikh politics remain in a welter of confusion. There has been a good deal of talk amongst Sikhs to the effect that Ajit Singh should be coerced into resigning from his seat on the N.W.F.P. Ministry in order to show the world that a Muslim League Raj is intolerable to the Sikh community. I have

impressed on Punjab Ministers that they should keep strictly aloof from any such campaign and they have assured me that they intend to do so. Master Tara Singh is said to be wearying of his hermitage and to be thinking of enhancing his claim to saintliness by launching another attack on the unholy State of Kapurthala. This gambit has already been overplayed and I doubt whether it will be repeated.

[1] See No. 73, note 2.

517

Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/221: f 86

CONFIDENTIAL *23 May 1944*

Report No. 10

4. The majority of educated people in this Province, so far as I can judge, approve of Malik Khizar Hayat's action in refusing to submit to dictation by Jinnah, though they criticise the dismissal of Shaukat and speak of him as having been sacrificed for political ends. My Ministers, however,—as was to be expected—hold that the Punjab Premier was wrong in resisting Jinnah's proposal that the Punjab Ministry should sail under the Muslim League flag; their reason being that Khizar Hayat was coming too much under the control of Chhotu Ram and that, therefore, guidance from the League High Command was essential. They argue that, as Jinnah has never tried to interfere in internal administrative matters in the North-West Frontier Province, there was no fear of his doing so in the Punjab.

518

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/111: ff 30–1

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *25 May 1944, 6.30 pm*

470. Kashmir has given some indications that he would like to reach some decision on his programme. Arrangements have been made to keep him occupied here until the end of June. I think that he would then like to return to India but does not wish to take the initiative himself. He has also let it be known that he would like before returning to go if that were possible to see operations in France but it is highly unlikely that conditions will be suitable

for this. It might however be feasible to arrange for him to visit Indian troops on the Italian front on his way back. If you agree with this idea I will take soundings here as to whether arrangements could be made for him to pay two or three days' visit to Italy and would then ask you to suggest to him that he might care to do this early in July and return to India afterwards. Please reply on this by 30th May as I am then seeing C.I.G.S.

2. I gather that Firoz contemplates staying here till towards the end of July and I do not think that there is any necessity for him to stay longer.

3. With reference to paragraph 1 of my private letter of 18th May[1] Prime Minister has now agreed to arrangement proposed for monthly meeting with High Commissioners, and Bruce will cease to attend War Cabinet as Representative of Australia except on exceptional occasions. Prime Minister would I think be glad if Indian Representatives could return to India at any rate in July and as regards future best course may be to do nothing until some special occasion arises for sending another Indian Representative to London.[2]

[1] No. 511.

[2] In his reply in tel. 145–S.C. of 28 May, Lord Wavell agreed with this tel. throughout. L/PO/6/111.

519

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND TOP SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *25 May 1944*
Received: 3 June

I am glad you have got Dalal fixed up. It should take a lot of wind out of the sails of those who would try to make out a difference between an unenterprising government and a far-seeing body of industrialists that the ablest of these industrialists should be harnessed to the shafts of reality. I haven't mentioned the appointment yet to Firoz and, from what he said to me the other day about Muslim feelings of misgiving as to the ambitions of Hindu industrialists, he may not altogether like the appointment. However, he will no doubt realise that as a Member of Council Dalal should get a much more balanced view than he would solely in confabulation with fellow industrialists.

2. I was also glad to get your telegram[1] this morning about Paranjpye. I am told in this Office that he excels both at chess and at billiards, and it is just possible that he may find congenial spirits in both of these pursuits in Australia. Otherwise, they don't seem to remember much of him here and I can only hope that he will go down well with the Australians.

* * *

4. Owing to the Empire Conference and the absorption of the Prime Minister and others in the Second Front, I have not been able yet to bring the question of Bajpai's position before the Cabinet, but hope that I may be able to do so shortly after Whitsuntide.

5. We shall no doubt have a full-dress Indian debate before long. My idea—and I think that will correspond with the view of the House generally—will be to try and turn it as much as possible towards the future and towards the economic and defence problems of post-war India rather [than] to go on chewing the cud of the old political controversy. I hardly suppose that by then Gandhi will have launched anything in the way of a new programme which could seriously affect the debate. I see that he is inviting the old stalwarts of the Indian Liberal Party to communicate their views to him. I doubt if he is likely to get much enlightenment from that quarter: certainly not as regards any constructive compromise with Jinnah: nor, I imagine, will they have the courage to tell him definitely to go back on the old resolution which started all the mischief in 1942.

* * *

7. The battle in Italy seems to be going well and it looks as if we might be on the outskirts of Rome in a very few days' time. The Indian troops have evidently played an effective part in it all and I only hope that their doings have been well publicised in India.

8. In that connection I was reading the other night a large instalment of the "Tiger Kills"[2] with a foreword by Auchinleck. I frankly confess I was very disappointed. It is the sort of stuff that may be read with interest in regimental messes and by those who took part in the operations; but it does not seem to me to give any really intelligible picture to the ordinary public of what the Indian Army is, how it is constituted, or of the part it played in the general strategy of the North African campaign. It must be some two years or more ago[3] that I urged Linlithgow to let Eric Linklater go out and write the story of the Indian Army for the wider public, and I could never quite understand why the suggestion was regarded as not worth while. I wonder, even now whether it would not be worth getting hold of Linklater or some other good writer who would really, in a book of very moderate length, give a vivid picture of what the Indian fighting services have done in all theatres of war up to the end of the Second Front in Europe?

[1] 1094–S of 23 May in which Lord Wavell said he had informed Council of the appointment that morning. L/PO/10/18.

[2] *The Tiger Kills. Story of British and Indian Troops with the Eighth Army in North Africa* (London, H.M.S.O., 1944).

[3] In fact in September 1941. L/I/1/849.

520

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru

L/P&J/8/513: f 329

No. F. 125/25/G.G./43 NAINI TAL, *28 May 1944*

My dear Sir Tej Bahadur,

I am afraid that by an oversight your letter of April 27th[1] and the documents forwarded with it only came to my attention a few days ago; or I would have sent to you a personal reply earlier. I have read with interest the forceful statement of your point of view in the memorandum, but I do not accept it as fair to Government. I must remind you that the suspension of democratic institutions in the section 93 provinces was due to the refusal of the majority party in each of the provinces concerned to remain in office for reasons which had nothing to do with the provincial administration. If as you believe, Ministries could now be formed in some or all the section 93 provinces, it seems to me that the first move should come from the party or parties which are prepared to take office and establish a stable Government in present conditions. In the Provinces formerly under section 93 but now again under ministerial Government, the first move has come from the party leaders. If you feel that a Ministry could now be set up in the United Provinces, I hope you will advise those concerned to approach the Governor.

I am sure that your estimate of the performance of the section 93 Governments does not do them adequate justice. During the past six months I have visited all the eleven provinces, and while I quite realise that the lack of political opportunity is galling to many in those under section 93 administration, I do not think that there is any disregard of public opinion as a whole or of the rights of the mass of the people. For example, the Bombay Government has introduced the most progressive food administration in India, and has to all appearance carried public opinion with it in doing so. I am not suggesting that section 93 administration is preferable to ministerial administration. But it is by no means as objectionable as your memorandum suggests.

2. I am anxious to see the political life to India restored to the normal, and progress made on the path to self-government. But I do not see how His Majesty's Government or the Governor-General can in some unexplained way produce a "National Government" at the Centre and Ministries in the Provinces without some very marked spirit of co-operation from outside. A "National Government" is a possibility only if the major political parties are prepared to work together with each other and with H.M.G., and I can as yet see no signs of this. My view also is that drastic constitutional changes should not be made in war time, and that a National Government would have to be estab-

lished within the framework of the present constitution, a limitation which is apparently unacceptable to Indian leaders.

My own view is that during the period of the war a National Government should be a Business rather than a Political Government, devoting its energies to the great administrative problems of India during war and to preparation for post-war economic development, while some body should be formed to study the political problem with a view to arriving at a scheme for political settlement, and the means of change-over after the war. This is generally the view I expressed in my address[2] to the Legislature.

This letter is not for publication.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] See No. 481, note 1. [2] See No. 399, note 1.

521

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *30 May 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 18th May.[1] I have had your telegram[2] about the return of Kashmir and Firoz, and have agreed[3] to your suggestions. I also agree that the need for continuous Indian representation at the War Cabinet is doubtful and that after Kashmir and Firoz return we need make no immediate plans for replacing them. But the educative value is great and for this reason I should like later on to send another of my colleagues and a Prince such as Bhopal.

I mentioned in my last letter[4] Firoz's tendency to express views with which his colleagues here might not agree. In his most recent letter which reached me a few days ago he showed signs of having been got at, possibly by Leathers, on the food import question, and told me that India should make up her mind to be self-supporting and should not demand additional shipping for food-grains. He had also been discussing high commercial policy with Woolton. In my answer I gave him a word of caution, and I telegraphed[5] to you asking you to see that Firoz's statements are not regarded as authoritative. I expect the people he meets in London realize that what he says has to be taken with a grain of salt; but I would not put it past some of your colleagues to use his statements against us here.

[1] No. 511. [2] No. 518. [3] See No. 518, note 2. [4] No. 515, para. 3.
[5] 141–S.C. of 28 May which is on the lines of this sub para. L/PO/6/111.

2. Hill told me in a private letter that he had interested the Parliamentary Medical Group in his scheme for a really first-class Medical Centre at Delhi. I have already initiated discussion on this, and on the question of a National War Memorial. The scheme is most attractive, but I am not yet sure whether we can adopt it as our National War Memorial, as Hill suggested. Auchinleck feels that the National War Memorial should be something more closely connected with the Fighting Services. We have to decide some time what to do with the Sudan gift of £100,000, which might well be used for a special feature in a National War Memorial to be named after the Sudan, and I have asked Auchinleck to get together some preliminary proposals which can be considered by a Committee of Council.

The proposal that 100 Indian Medical Officers should be sent to the United Kingdom to work as House Surgeons is also being considered departmentally. It seems to me a very good idea.

* * *

4. I am letting the Political Department see your comments[6] on the future of the Indian States. Nothing much is likely to happen here until the end of July or early August when Bhopal intends to present me with a memorandum. He is to discuss this with me privately, and later is to bring some of his fellow Princes for a more formal discussion. I have no idea what the memorandum will contain, nor do I know what line Bhopal will take.

5. I have little to tell you about food this week. I have at last sent you a telegram[7] about the third wheat forecast which, as you remember, gave a more favourable picture than the Food Department figures on which I based my demand for imports. The forecast did not allow for much of the special damage in late March and early April, and is probably too optimistic by approximately half a million tons. The Food Department figures take forecasts into account, but are based mainly on what the Provinces can be expected to do. I am naturally more interested in a realistic view than in what might be done if India were a much smaller country with a more efficient administration and a perfect system of communications. Casey's procurement of rice has improved somewhat, but is still unsatisfactory, though statistically Bengal should be overflowing with rice. Bombay and Madras, the two Provinces with the most highly organised food administration, are both suffering from local shortages due largely to difficulties of movement. I must work on the basis of what is actually happening rather than on vague reports that a crop is average or better than average. Reverting to the wheat position, I think the Governors concerned, with the possible exception of Twynam, took too pessimistic a view, but the damage was undoubtedly considerable and much of it was in quality rather than in quantity—a thing which it is obviously difficult to assess.

6. Gandhi has broken his silence, but is reimposing it, with a short daily period for conversation, for some little time longer. His doctors announced a few days ago that daily bulletins on his health would be discontinued, but they have just issued one saying that his blood pressure is still fluctuating and that there is no great change in the anæmia. The Home Department were informed a few days ago from a reliable source that B. C. Roy had stated that before he saw Gandhi he was urged by the Bombay Secretariat to give a certificate justifying Gandhi's release, and was told that the Government of India were under pressure from London to release Gandhi. According to the source Roy implied that he had "cooked" his opinion. The fact that Roy has been making statements of this kind is confirmed by an intercepted letter sent by him to a private correspondent. I have asked Colville to make enquiries and let me know exactly what passed between Roy and the official concerned in Bombay. This may be a mare's nest and we may never find out what actually happened. The intercepted letter shows how difficult it is in India to trust a professional opinion where political sympathies are involved. But I think there is little doubt that Gandhi is still a pretty sick man.

7. The Muslim League have duly expelled Khizr and will now, I suppose, start on his Muslim colleagues in the Punjab Cabinet. For the moment the situation in the Punjab is calmer, but both sides are marshalling their forces and will try to set up party organisations in the constituencies. The Muslim element in the Unionist Party has been far too casual in the past and has much ground to make good.

Lewis is still having a certain amount of trouble with Parlakimedi. The other day Parlakimedi suggested the inclusion in the Cabinet of one Patnaik, who was to take charge of a new portfolio. He assured Lewis that he had adequate support for this proposal, but later had to withdraw it. Friction within the small Orissa Cabinet is increasing, and Lewis has just reported that Parlakimedi and Godavaris Misra are likely to part company, in which event Section 93 may be necessary for an interval at least. Lewis is abreast of all the local intrigues, which are not easy for an outsider to understand.

* * *

11. My Private Secretary sent Turnbull by the bag of 4th May a set of documents[8] sent me by Sapru after the Non-Party Conference held at Lucknow on 7th and 8th April 1944. A copy of my reply[9] to Sapru goes by this bag. I thought it best to write to him myself as, though he can do little to help, he is still a prominent figure in Liberal circles. His letter forwarding the documents was of course acknowledged by my Private Secretary's Office when it came in.

12. I have seen your telegram[10] about the Bombay Plan and the possibility

[6] No. 513. [7] 142–S.C. of 28 May. L/E/8/3323. [8] See No. 481. [9] No. 520.
[10] 12076 of 27 May. L/E/8/2637.

of communicating Gregory's criticisms of it to the editor of the *Economist*. I have asked Jones to advise on this in consultation with Gregory. I should say off-hand that it is a good idea. I do not know whether *The Times* have published Holburn's special article[11] on Planning in India, which covers some of the points we want taken on the Bombay Plan.

13. I hope to reply very shortly to your private telegram[12] about the Bengal Famine Enquiry in which you suggest that Purshottamdas Thakurdas is not a suitable member and that we ought to add a member qualified to deal with medical and public health matters. Srivastava is very keen on Purshottamdas Thakurdas and urges that he is not so identified with any political party as to make his selection unsuitable. In a matter of this kind I can hardly overrule Srivastava, and on the merits I feel it would be wrong to do so. If the Commission is to carry any weight, the businessman must be someone really eminent, and Purshottamdas Thakurdas fills the bill. I am very doubtful about the need for a medical member. The original intention was to have one, but when you raised the question of conflict with the Bhore Committee[13] it was decided to drop him. The Commission will be concerned more with the administrative than with the technical and professional sides of medical and public health work, and it is arguable that the opinion of trained administrators based on expert evidence would be more valuable than the opinion of a medical man. Srivastava and Jogendra Singh will not accept Jolly but would accept Russell, who is, I understand, working for Government somewhere in Scotland.

* * *

17. Casey has just written to me saying that he is thinking of appointing a Committee or Commission to overhaul the administrative machinery in Bengal and to recommend improvements. His original idea was to select a Chairman with long Indian experience, but he can think of no one really suitable, and would now like to find a first-class man from home who would be supported by members from Bengal and two well-organised Provinces like Madras and the Punjab. He has asked me to suggest a Chairman and also the names of possible members from Madras and the Punjab. I am going into this with Thorne. Provisionally I think that the Famine Enquiry Commission will have to hear a good deal of evidence about the administrative system in Bengal and that Woodhead might perhaps stay on after completing the famine enquiry to deal with the administrative problem. I will write more fully when I know Thorne's views. I think Casey is quite right to take this matter up. Bengal was in a shocking state last year and Casey is privately much disturbed at the inadequacy of the machine. I doubt if the average Bengal official knows how differently things are done in Provinces like Madras, Bombay and the Punjab, so that, apart from the numerical weakness of the services, administrative standards are low.

18. Paranjpye has accepted the Australian appointment and Khare embarrassed me by letting the Associated Press announce it before you had been informed and the formal consent of the Australian Government had been secured. I hope the Australians will not attribute this lapse to bad manners—Khare intended no harm but does not know very much about usage in these matters.

* * *

22. We had a very pleasant trip to Naini Tal where I played some golf on a curious little 18-hole course in the Government House grounds. The hot weather has now really begun in Delhi, and we hope to go up to Simla on 9th June for the inside of three weeks.

[11] See No. 515, note 8. [12] 469 of 25 May. L/E/8/3320.

[13] A Committee, chaired by Sir Joseph Bhore, which was appointed by the Government of India in October 1943 to investigate all aspects of the problem of public health, both curative and preventive. Its Report (H.C. 8. I–III/17,000) dated 18 December 1945 was published (Government of India Press, Calcutta, 1946).

522

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 287

L/S &G/7/262: f 433

Recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *31 May 1944*

I propose, as soon as military considerations permit, to resume recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police, broadly on the lines hitherto adopted.

As a result of the cessation of recruitment and the demands which have been made upon them to provide personnel for important special posts created to deal with matters arising out of the war, these Services have been subjected to a very heavy strain. An abnormal number of vacancies is therefore to be expected as soon as retirement is permissible, particularly since an increasing number of officers now serving have already reached the normal age for retirement. Accordingly, both the present Viceroy and his predecessor have urged upon me that, if the administration of India is to be maintained in proper order and, indeed, in a fit state to be handed over without unfairness to a successor Government, resumption of recruitment, and, in particular, of European recruitment, at the earliest practicable moment is essential.

On the assumption that to attract European candidates of the highest quality it is necessary to hold out the prospect of a full career of 25 or 30 years' service,

and in order to avoid the imputation of acting inconsistently with the declared policy of His Majesty's Government which the promise of so long a career would afford, Lord Linlithgow suggested for consideration the creation of an Imperial Overseas Service, members of which would be interchangeable between India, Burma and the Colonies, so that those rendered redundant in India could be absorbed elsewhere. But, after careful examination of this suggestion by my Advisers, I am of the opinion that such an arrangement is neither practicable nor capable of providing a satisfactory solution of the problem.

I have come to the conclusion that the only course which will meet the situation is the resumption of recruitment broadly on the lines on which it has been conducted in the past, but with certain important modifications in the terms of appointment, designed on the one hand to offer sufficient attractions to suitable candidates, and on the other hand to forestall, as far as possible, allegations by Indian political opinion of a change of policy on the part of His Majesty's Government. These modifications are (*a*) the inclusion in the regulations of a clear intimation that candidates recruited under them will be liable to have their appointments terminated at any time after an appropriate period of notice if, as a result of constitutional changes, it becomes necessary to dispense with their services; and (*b*) the appointment of recruits on the basis no longer of pensionable service but of contribution to a provident fund, combined with the assurance of a gratuity in the event of such discharge, graduated according to the length of service rendered.

My Advisers have given a great deal of careful thought to the problem and are in agreement with my proposal to resume recruitment as soon as possible on the lines suggested. I hope that my colleagues will approve the proposal, which I am satisfied is necessary if an administrative breakdown is to be avoided. Whatever may be the future constitutional developments, it is in India's essential interest that the efficiency of the administrative machine should be effectively maintained.

L. S. A.

523

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *2 June 1944*
Received: 12 June

I think the appointment of Dalal has gone down very well here and was effectively prepared for by Holburn's article[1] in *The Times* and a vigorous

leader.[2] Firoz expressed himself as quite delighted and thinks you have really taken the wind out of the sails of the big business critics.

2. Firoz himself continues full of keenness and is seeing a lot of people, more particularly on agricultural and military matters. He went down the other day to look into the whole system of O.C.T.U. training for commissions and I think got some useful ideas. He is staying the week-end shortly with Rob Hudson to see the work on his farm and discuss agriculture generally; and I.C.I. have invited him down to their fertilizer experimental station at Jealott's Hill. He makes an excellent personal impression wherever he goes, and his speeches have gone down very well everywhere, even if they are sometimes a bit slapdash and inaccurate.

3. Kashmir has just made an excellent little statement on the work of the Empire Conference, emphasising the fact that India was by no means merely on the fringe of the Conference, but very much at the heart of it. I have spoken to Brooke about the possibility of his spending a few days with the Army in Italy on his way back early in July and he thinks the situation out there should make that quite easy to arrange.

[Para. 4, on the Bombay port disaster, omitted.]

5. I see Gandhi has definitely refused to unsay the resolution of August 1942, but adds that it is innocuous. It is very difficult to find out what the old rascal really means, but it is beginning to look increasingly as if it isn't going to matter much what he does say or do, and after a while I dare say interest in him will flag. It all goes to show that you were right in releasing him, even if he may protract an ineffective existence for a good while to come. However, I had better not venture on prophecy or the quiescent volcano might still erupt in some incalculable direction.

6. Now for bad news. Leathers held me back from urging Winston to stir up the President about food ships, but I eventually did so a few days ago. However, before he took any action on my reminder the President has now replied to say that while he would very much like to help, his military advisers tell him that the shipping cannot possibly be spared from operations. I must bring the matter up as one of urgency at the next Cabinet Meeting and see whether Winston would not be willing to renew his appeal for some smaller figure. Even a quarter-of-a-million tons of shipping from America might help, and somehow or other Leathers might find a bit at this end, especially if military operations here start well in the next few weeks.

7. I haven't telegraphed to you about this today as it would only worry you over the week-end, and as I hope that I may be able to suggest some possibility of help after next Monday's meeting of the Cabinet.

[1] See No. 515, note 8. [2] Published on 31 May and headed 'India Looks Ahead'.

8. Coupled with the food situation, and indeed very little less urgent, is the whole question of transport and other equipment. Here again the Americans are terribly sticky, though Wheeler has at last conceded that 5,000 trucks should come under Lease-Lend, and I hope Rowlands has been able to straighten out what seems to have been a misapprehension of his as to India's capacity for assembling further rolling stock.

[Para. 9, on a letter received by Mr Amery on the Indore situation, omitted.]

10. You asked me in your private telegram No. 767–S[3] of 15th April to raise with Mackenzie King the subject of the Franchise in British Columbia. I am sorry to say that I got no opportunity to do so. Mackenzie King was very elusive and would accept no private engagements while the Conference was on, and gave it to be understood that he would be here for some little while afterwards. As soon as it was over he vanished for several days on a tour of the Canadian troops and then left at the week-end. I am sorry to have missed this opportunity, but I frankly doubt if I should have got anything out of him. He did nothing at the Conference, or ever will do anything at any time or on any subject, which might risk losing a single vote!

11. Gwyer's memorandum[4] on Indian Ocean defence arrived too late for consideration by the Prime Ministers' Conference, but I have sent copies privately to those interested, i.e. all except Mackenzie King. Smuts in his reply[5] speaks of it as a valuable paper dealing with a subject of crucial importance from the British point of view and one which will call for very serious consideration. He is not sure how far, in the present suspicious mood of India, it can be ventilated usefully at this moment. He also points out that South and East Africa are in the Indian Ocean and very much concerned in its problems but are not actually mentioned in the paper. There is no doubt that South Africa, inevitably linked up with East Africa and so with the Middle East, is essentially an Indian Ocean power rather than an Atlantic power. She does face on the South Atlantic, it is true, but only where it is opposite to South America and in a region of no interlocking political and strategical problems comparable to those of the Indian Ocean.

[Para. 12, on an honour for the organiser of B.B.C. Indian programmes; and para. 13, on prospects for international organisation, omitted.]

PS. 1.—Queen Mary, whose interest in India is unflagging, has let me know through Lady Cynthia Colville that she would like to invite Birla or Tata when they are over here to lunch with her. I am replying saying that I think the idea is excellent but that I am consulting you as to which is really the right man to ask. Also, in order to avoid any suggestion that this is an indirect way of inducing an atmosphere for orders, I am suggesting that Queen Mary might

also ask down one of the scientists when they come. Perhaps you could let me know what you feel about both suggestions and also as to who would be the right people to ask.

[*PS. 2*, enclosing a private memorandum by Mr Amery on Imperial Preference, omitted.]

[3] L/PO/10/18. [4] Copies of this memorandum are on L/P&S/12/727.
[5] Field Marshal Smuts' reply is not on L/P&S/12/727 which does, however, contain an acknowledgement from Mr Curtin.

524

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/WS/1/654: f 196

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *3 June 1944*
TOP SECRET

506. Guard. Food Imports. Following is President's reply which has just come in: *Begins* I refer to your telegram No. 665[1] of April 29th 1944, in which you set forth the urgent need for additional shipping in order that greater quantities of wheat than now contemplated may be imported within the year into India from Australia.

Upon receipt of your telegram I immediately directed that the matter be taken under urgent consideration by the appropriate authorities of this Government. The appeal has my utmost sympathy and you may be sure that there is full realization of the military, political and humanitarian factors involved. The American Joint Chiefs of Staff have reported, however, that they are unable on military grounds to consent to the diversion of shipping necessary to meet the request because of the adverse effect such a diversion would have upon military operations already undertaken or in prospect.

Needless to say, I regret exceedingly the necessity of giving you this unfavourable reply. [*Ends.*]

[1] See No. 486.

525

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/WS/1/654: f 194

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *4 June 1944, 5.40 pm*
PRIVATE
TOP SECRET

1162–S. Guard. Your telegrams Nos. 505[1] and 506[2] of 3rd June. Food imports. Statement follows in my immediately succeeding telegram. You already have a vast mass of information.

2. The situation is so grave that I must press for immediate decision.

3. I have so far withheld details from Council as a whole though I have kept Srivastava informed. As soon as final decision is reached I must inform Council and political consequences may be serious. Srivastava who is grateful for my efforts but naturally feels his departmental responsibility will certainly press to visit London to argue the case with War Cabinet, or alternatively will resign. My other colleagues will also take grave view.

4. What do War Cabinet suggest I should tell Mountbatten? I cannot feed his troops unless I get imports asked for.

[1] In this tel., Mr Amery explained he had sent No. 524 on to Lord Wavell at once as he imagined he would wish to see the President's reply. Mr Amery suggested Lord Wavell should not press for an immediate final decision on the subject but send him his views and the latest estimates of the position, including reactions on India as a base for operations, in a suitable form for circulation to the Cabinet. L/PO/10/18.

[2] No. 524.

526

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *4 June 1944, 5.40 pm*
TOP SECRET *Received: 4 June, 5 pm*

No. 1163–S. Guard. My Immediately preceding telegram. Following is text of statement:—

Begins. 1. Before the war we had secured India against famine. Our success was due to the extension of irrigation; to the certainty of imports when shortages occurred and prices rose; and to a transportation system sufficient to deal with local scarcities. But India's food position remained none the less fundamentally insecure, and in isolation the country would always be liable

to famine. There was an increasing dependence on imports and the growth of population was pressing heavily on food supply.

2. The war led to a rise in food-prices in line with the general rise in price levels, and after the loss of Burma to an actual shortage of supply. Imports became uncertain and irregular (imports of rice, the most important foodgrain in India's economy ceased altogether), and there was a growing demand for the fighting services. The increased strain on the transportation system impaired the efficiency of distribution. Consumers tended to buy and hoard, and the vast number of small producers with a limited supply of consumer goods on which to spend their money began to hold their crops and to consume more themselves.

3. There were three remedies for this situation—*first* to establish control over distribution; *secondly* to grow more food; and *thirdly* to import more food. The first two remedies have been applied. During the past eighteen months procurement in surplus areas, movement to deficit areas, and distribution within deficit areas have been organised and most of the large cities in India are now rationed. The "Grow More Food" Campaign resulted in a substantial change-over from cash[1] crops (especially short-staple cotton) to food-crops, and in genuine efforts to improve yields and to extend cultivation. In Bombay and the Central Provinces compulsory levies of foodgrains from the producers are being introduced, and in Bombay there will shortly be compulsory crop regulation. But in applying these remedies we are hampered by the weakness of the administrative machine. There is a general tendency to evade controls, and the present constitution does not lend itself to co-ordinated and decisive action in the Provinces. The Services have, in the pursuit of political aims, no doubt laudable in themselves, been greatly undermined during the past twenty-five years. This administrative deterioration is due to the policy of His Majesty's Government and not to any failure of energy or morale in India. The net result is that our control over distribution and drive to grow more food are not in themselves adequate (it is doubtful whether they ever could be), and that large imports of foodgrains are necessary.

4. I have already reported[2] that if I am to make sure of feeding the civil population and fighting services in 1944 I need imports of 924,000 tons of wheat including 200,000 tons already promised.[3] This is for current consumption

[1] 'cash' deciphered as 'basic'. [2] No. 466.

[3] In tel. 509 of 5 June to Sir E. Jenkins, Mr Turnbull asked, with reference to this sentence, whether Lord Wavell's request was for an additional 724,000 tons by the end of 1944. He referred to Mr Hutchings tel. on this subject summarised in No. 440, note 5. Mr Turnbull also asked whether the figure of losses in the Bombay explosion had not now been reduced to 36,000 tons. In tel. 1178–S of 6 June, Sir E. Jenkins replied that the additional 724,000 tons was required to be delivered by 30 April 1945 and that Lord Wavell did not consider it worth making any adjustment of the original figure of 50,000 tons for the Bombay losses. L/E/8/3323.

only and gives me no reserve. No juggling with statistics can alter this statement which is in my opinion conservative. In dealing with Indian agricultural statistics it is necessary to remember that for the permanently settled Provinces (Bengal, Bihar, Assam and Orissa) and for most of the Indian States they are largely guesswork, while for the remaining Provinces of British India they are intended rather as a rough and ready guide to Revenue officers in suspending and remitting revenues than as a scientific estimate of yields. I am compelled to take a realistic view of what is actually happening as reported by Governors. At present the Governors of Bombay, Bengal, Madras, Assam and the Central Provinces are anxious, and in Bombay and Bengal the anxiety is grave. The Governors of Bihar and Orissa are more confident, but Bihar has been through a difficult time and will inevitably react to conditions in Bengal, and Orissa has local scarcities. The Governor of the United Provinces has just reported that he will be self-sufficient but no more. The N.-W.F.P. has had a temporary shortage of wheat but its problems are comparatively small. The Punjab and Sind are comfortably off and I depend on their Governments to help the less fortunate Provinces. Their capacity to help is however much less than last year.

5. Without the imports I have asked for I cannot feed the fighting services, and I am likely to be faced by a grave breakdown in two or more Provinces simultaneously with risk of disorder, and certainty of dislocation of the transportation system and paralysis of military and industrial effort. The Bengal Famine was one of the greatest disasters that have occurred to a people under British Rule, and I am clear that it is impossible to concentrate on operational movements and production in the midst of a starving population. I leave you to imagine the political results both in India and at home of a similar or worse disaster this year.

6. I request the War Cabinet to sanction the shipping required for India's essential imports and to do so without delay. *Ends.*

527

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *6 June 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 25th May 1944.[1] Dalal has had a good press on the whole, though the Muslim League profess to think that I have sold out

to the Hindu capitalists with whom Dalal and his Tata colleagues are associated, and M. N. Roy will not be pleased. Dalal came to see me today during a short visit to Delhi. He seems to know his own mind and wants to make a lot of changes—including the appointment of a Secretary of his own choosing instead of Hutton, and the Centralisation of Research. I shall have to give him a fairly free hand, but I can foresee some rows between him and his colleagues.

2. I am glad you approve the selection of Paranjpye for Australia. Khare's premature disclosure of it to the press has, as I feared, annoyed the Commonwealth Government a little, and I have had no reply to my official telegram to the Governor-General asking for the agreement of his Ministers to Paranjpye's appointment and suggesting an official announcement. I have no doubt the Commonwealth Government will agree, but they may refuse to make an official announcement on the ground that the Australian newspapers have already published the appointment as ordinary news.

[Para. 3, on an appointment for Waris Ameer Ali, omitted.]

4. I am sorry Bajpai's position has not yet been settled. He is sensitive about his relations with the Government of India and his standing in Washington, and a few days ago I saw a protest from him on a report in the *Statesman* that the Commerce Member had said in the Assembly that if necessary he would consider sending a non-official representative of India to the U.N.R.R.A. The report was wrong, and the External Affairs Department will appease Bajpai. But he is on the look out for any sign that he does not possess the full confidence of the Government of India. You will remember his attitude over the proposal to establish a tripartite committee in Washington to deal with Indian supply questions. Your own telegram[2] about the proposed Aviation Conference in Washington showed that you were aware of the importance of giving Bajpai a leading part in the handling of Indian affairs there, and when I put the point to Mohamed Usman, he readily agreed to let him lead the Indian delegation. I am sure it would oil the wheels if Bajpai became a Minister and felt that he had an assured position.

5. Gandhi has so far made no political move of any importance, and I do not think we can expect one from him for some weeks. He followed up the publication of the Jinnah letter by a letter to Jayakar in which he said that he could not withdraw the resolution of August 1942 and that the sanctions behind it were "the breath of his life" or words to that effect. A day or two after this letter appeared in the newspapers, Gandhi's Secretary, Pyare Lal, gave an explanation of it—the well worn one that Gandhi himself has no authority to withdraw or modify the resolution. This has led to some sharp criticism in the Muslim League press. Gandhi will certainly get no constructive

[1] No. 519. [2] Not traced in India Office Records.

guidance from the Liberal leaders, nor, in my opinion, is Jinnah likely to do more than say that the acceptance of Pakistan is an essential condition to any discussion with Gandhi and the Congress. It is possible that when Gandhi is really convalescent, and feels strong enough to do so, he will begin to take the line that the members of the Working Committee must be released. He may also get busy with the food problem. But I still have a feeling that he is a sick man who will take a long time yet to get really fit. After that he is unpredictable. He professes to believe that he will be put back in prison on recovery.

6. I dealt with your long telegrams[3] about censorship over the week-end. Much of the criticism of the Government of India is due to political bias. Most of the American correspondents, and some of the British, disapprove of our presence in this country, and take every opportunity they can to criticise us. Indian journalists are only too ready to join in the chorus. Our political background is much more difficult than yours, and the distorted presentation of news and the expression of extravagant views are only too common. The material on which censors have to work is thus naturally explosive, and it is far from easy to maintain a staff of officers really competent to handle it. I am satisfied that on the whole the censors have done well in difficult conditions, and that there has been no large scale suppression of news or views. On the whole India is exceptionally quiet, and the belief that sensational news is being suppressed is quite untrue. On the other hand, owing largely to the size of the country and our defective communications, there have been errors of judgment and some silly things have been done. I think an improvement can be made especially if, as is now proposed, the final responsibility is placed on the censorship authorities, and departments objecting to their decision are required to state a case to me. I suggested[4] some changes in your draft statement for Parliament, mainly to bring out that on the whole our censorship has not been illiberal and that I am taking steps to see that our policy is applied in practice. Don't be apologetic about it, the Indian censorship has not been anything like as bad as is made out. You mentioned in one of your telegrams[5] the importance of having a really good Chief Press Adviser. I am sorry we have lost Kirchner; Sultan Ahmed was very keen on bringing in an Indian and decided not to give Kirchner an extension when his contract expired. His choice fell on U. N. Sen, who has been known and liked for many years in New Delhi and Simla, and has the experience to perform the duties of the post. I rather doubt whether he will be able to stand the course, as he is not a young man and his work with Reuters and A.P.I. has probably not been very heavy for some years. You will realise, however, that if a Member of Council himself selects a man for an appointment of this kind, it is not easy for me to overrule him. I have from time to time to disagree with my colleagues, and on the whole they take it very well. But it would be quite impossible for me continually to overrule

them in the day-to-day working of their departments, and I think Sen, who has some competent Deputies, will be able to do the work unless he has a physical breakdown.

[Para. 7, on an appeal from a Lieutenant-Colonel and Mr Amery's criticism of *The Tiger Kills*, omitted.]

8. I was much disappointed at the President's decision about shipping for food imports, and on the 4th June despatched telegrams[6] which will enable you to impress the War Cabinet, I hope, with the seriousness and urgency of the situation. You already have a vast mass of information, and in my statement for the War Cabinet I kept to what I think are the essential points. Few people in the U.K., and perhaps not very many people in India, realise how dependent India was in peace time on the automatic arrival of imports when things went wrong, and on the railway system, which could be relied upon to move food-grains into areas where there was scarcity. It is true that India was in normal years very nearly self-sufficient, but imports were seldom below 1,000,000 tons a year and were increasing; and the population was pressing heavily on the food supply. The arrival of imports at once checked artificial scarcity due to speculation, and physical scarcity, usually confined to certain well-known areas, was dealt with quickly and efficiently under the Famine Code. The war has altered all that, and we are faced with a situation which we could deal with ourselves only if we had an educated and highly co-operative population, and a highly organised administrative system. The statistics, which are unreliable, may be quoted to show that we are better off than the Food Department and I think. I maintain that the only real guide is what is actually happening in the Provinces, and as I have said in my telegrams, several of the Governors are now seriously alarmed. I am told that in Bombay there is talk of reducing the scale of the ration for Bombay City; and the compulsory levies from producers in Bombay and the Central Provinces and the proposed crop regulation in Bombay, are novel measures which may or may not go down with the people. There is no doubt at all that if India is to be fed and maintain her efficiency as a military base, we must have the imports I have asked for. I feel that the War Cabinet in so serious a matter must trust the views of the man on the spot, or get rid of him.

9. We seem to be making slow progress about the Famine Enquiry Commission. I do not know what line Srivastava will take about Purshottamdas Thakurdas. I agree that he is a difficult person; on the other hand, Srivastava has so far said that he considers him the best business man available and that he does not want a nonentity. Here again you will appreciate that it is not easy for me to overrule Srivastava, who has been very good about the far larger issue

[3] 12446–8 of 1–2 June. L/I/1/731. [4] In tels. 1170–S and 1171–S. *Ibid.*
[5] Namely, 12446 of 2 June. [6] Nos. 525 and 526.

of food imports. He could easily have made a great deal of trouble in Council about his departmental responsibility and the fact that the important telegrams on food imports have been mine and not his.

10. I sent you a telegram[7] a few days ago containing a personal message to Smuts about the situation in South Africa. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan has been telegraphing to Khare about the alleged machinations of various South African politicians and administrators. It is not easy to understand what is happening as most of the measures Shafa'at Ahmad Khan is afraid of would be taken under various local laws as to the effect of which I am not clear. Shafa'at Ahmad Khan's latest telegram is rather more confident, and I hope Smuts may be able to have the Pretoria Agreement fully implemented.

11. The arrangements for the *Haj* are still in the air. The Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Fleet, advised that he could not provide escorts and that we had better suspend the pilgrimage until the North Arabian Sea was free from enemy interference. I think this would be a great pity, and would much like to arrange the pilgrimage on a limited scale—say for 5,000 pilgrims. I telegraphed[8] personally to Somerville on this subject, and also to you[9] asking for your support with the Admiralty. There is no doubt that Moslems feel strongly that with the improved war situation His Majesty's Government could and should help in this matter.

12. The Bengal Ministry have run into serious difficulties in the Assembly in the debates on their Secondary Education Bill, and I passed on to you[10] Casey's warning that he may have to recommend a Section 93 administration. The Speaker (Nausher Ali) let the Opposition get completely out of hand, and there are signs that some of Nazimuddin's Hindu colleagues are losing their nerve. Casey pressed Nazimuddin to move for the removal of the Speaker under Section 65 of the Constitution Act, and though Nazimuddin thought he might scrape together the necessary majority, he was obviously reluctant to do anything so drastic. Casey continued to advise Nazimuddin that unless he took a firm line his Government would disintegrate, and it was finally agreed after discussion between Nazimuddin and the Speaker that the Speaker should be given adequate protection and a suitable number of "chuckers out", and would do his best to maintain order when the debates were resumed this week. If the Speaker failed again, Nazimuddin was to move for his removal. I pointed out to Casey that if Nazimuddin made his motion and was defeated, he might treat it as a question of confidence and resign, and that it could then be represented by the Muslim League that his Government had been forced out of office by the Governor, although for all ordinary purposes it had an adequate majority in the Assembly. Casey replied that there was no difference of opinion between him and Nazimuddin, and that there was no reason why the motion about the Speaker should be treated as a question of confidence. We can only

wait and see what happens, but it seems possible that both Bengal and Orissa, to which I referred in my last letter,[11] may shortly come under Section 93.

13. The Punjab situation remains calm. Khizar has just issued a long statement on his expulsion from the Muslim League, in which he protests against the League's refusal to recognise the Sikander–Jinnah Pact. The statement is quite effective, but will not of course influence League opinion at all. In a private conversation of which Jogendra Singh sent a short account to Jenkins, Khizar said that he feared a serious deterioration in communal relations in the Punjab. He thought that the activities of the Muslim League must lead to communal bitterness, but as a Muslim Premier he could hardly take the drastic action likely to be required. I do not know if Khizar has expressed the same views to the Governor but I shall see them both in Simla within the next few days.

14. The fighting on the borders of Assam has given us a new refugee problem. The refugee organisation set up by the Commonwealth Relations Department during the evacuation of Burma is still in being, and the officer in charge of it was doing what he could. The new problem is, however, different from that of the Burma refugees as people will be moving from the Naga Hills and the Manipur State into the various Assam districts, and as soon as the Japanese are out of Assam, relief will have to be given to persons who have not left their homes but whose food and other property the Japanese have taken away or destroyed. I sent Ogilvie, Secretary in the Defence Department, to Assam to look into the problem on behalf of all departments, and it has been decided that the Governor of Assam shall take charge on behalf of the Government of India and shall use the relief organisation of the Commonwealth Relations Department with certain additions. It is obviously right that direct administrative responsibility should rest on the local people, with the Central Government finding the money and giving any other help that may be needed. The number of refugees is not at present very large—about 20,000 in all, I think—but it will be a big problem before we are through with it.

I have most encouraging reports about the conduct of the Nagas. It seems that very few of them have given any help to the Japanese, and they are doing all they can to help us by sending in information, acting as carriers even under fire, and disposing of Japanese stragglers. I have written to Clow asking what can be done to reward the staunchness of these people, both immediately and

[7] 1148–S of 2 June. In this tel. Lord Wavell stated that Sir Shafa'at Ahmad Khan had reported a further deterioration in the racial situation in Durban and agitation by certain members of the Durban City Council to obstruct and delay the implementation of the Pretoria agreement. Lord Wavell hoped Field Marshal Smuts would see the terms of the agreement were fully implemented at a very early date. L/P&J/8/301.

[8] 1150–S of 2 June. L/PO/10/18. [9] 1149–S of 2 June. *Ibid.*

[10] In tel. 1136–S of 31 May. L/P&J/8/652. [11] No. 521, para. 7.

later. It will probably be difficult to do very much for them, but I feel we must try. Ogilvie remarked after his visit to Assam that although the administration is weak in numbers, men like Bor, the Forest Officer who runs the refugee organisation, Pawsey, the Naga Hills Deputy Commissioner and Gimson, the Political Agent at Manipur, know their people and manage them very well. Clow seems happy now that I have accepted financial liability for the refugees on behalf of the Government of India.

15. In paragraph 10 of my letter of 7th March 1944,[12] I mentioned the question of the custody of private correspondence and the practice of Viceroys and Governors removing such correspondence when their term of office ends. This is not an urgent matter, but I shall be grateful for your views when you have been able to consider it.

[Para. 16, on the death of Sir Baron Jayatilaka; and para. 17, on information matters, omitted.]

18. Not long ago Mrs Kripalani, wife of the General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee who is in detention, was arrested at the house of an I.C.S. official named Mazumdar, at Patna. She had been wanted for some time as one of the leaders of the Congress underground movement. Rutherford wrote to me about the case saying that he had always been doubtful about Mazumdar's loyalty, and that there were one or two other members of the I.C.S. in Bihar of whom he was not sure. There was no case for a prosecution for harbouring as Mrs Kripalani had never been proclaimed as an offender, and the question was whether any action at all could be taken against Mazumdar. Rutherford thought that he should be asked by the Chief Secretary whether his political views were compatible with his remaining in the service, and should be encouraged to take a proportionate pension—he is quite near his full pension, I understand. I have advised Rutherford that as long as an officer's political opinions do not affect his work, they are no concern of Government. Mrs Kripalani is closely related to Mazumdar, and although there is a reasonable suspicion that he knew she was misbehaving herself, it may have been impossible for him to avoid taking her into his house. If, on the other hand, Mazumdar has in the past shown political prejudice in his work, or disclosed information derived from Government sources so as to aid subversive movements, there would be a case for suggesting to him that he should leave the service. You will, I am sure, agree that this is the right line to take. It is impossible to penalise officers for views which they hold privately; on the other hand, it is undesirable for officers to remain in Government service if they cannot loyally carry out the policy of Government. I told Rutherford that I could express no opinion about the other members of the I.C.S. of whom he was doubtful, as I knew nothing about them.

[Para. 19, on Major Lyons' visit to India, omitted.]

20. We are off to Simla for the inside of three weeks on the 9th June. Delhi has been very hot, but a storm has cleared the air for the time being.

[12] No. 414.

528

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/247: f 75

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL BARNES COURT, SIMLA, *7 June 1944*

No. 510–F.L.

As was anticipated, the Premier has been expelled from the Muslim League. He has issued a detailed statement explaining the position, but I am afraid it is far too long and involved for the ordinary citizen to appreciate. The Unionist Party is now in the anomalous position of having its leader no longer a member of the League while the rest of the Muslim Ministers and the rank and file still owe formal allegiance to this organization. The Ministers are likely to issue further statements, but so far they do not appear to have made up their minds clearly what attitude they should adopt. Several Muslim members of the Legislative Assembly are expected to visit Simla before long for various purposes and it is hoped that this will enable the Premier and his colleagues to take a more decisive line. It seems to me that at present they are disposed to be too much on the defensive. The Muslim League are about to start on a general propaganda campaign and it is high time that the Unionists took effective steps to counter these manœuvres. No more defections by Muslim M.L.As from the Unionist Party have been reported of late.

529

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 63

PRIVATE *8 June 1944*

1194–S. If there should be any occasion to return Gandhi to detention (which I certainly do not anticipate at present) I should propose to place him in Ahmednagar Fort as recommended in 909–S[1] of May 1st.

[1] See No. 490, para. 4.

530

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/E/8/3323: ff 115–16

TOP SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *8 June 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 20/44

Prime Minister

The Indian Foodgrains Committee met on 7th June[1] and considered the President's reply.[2]

2. Leathers assured us that there was no prospect of finding any more shipping from our own resources or of the U.S.A. finding some amount less than was asked for in your telegram to the President. The Viceroy's request is for 724,000 tons to be delivered by the end of April 1945, in addition to the 200,000 which is being sent in the second and third quarters of this year. I cannot disregard his serious warnings as to the consequences if this amount is not provided. The risks are restated by the Viceroy in paragraphs 4 to 6 of Appendix III of the attached paper.[3]

3. In these circumstances the Committee concluded that the only source from which shipping could be found for this purpose was from the shipping already allocated for military and other requirements for India. At an earlier stage Mountbatten and Auchinleck agreed that a cut of ten per cent. could be made in military shipments to India in favour of food. It was then estimated that this would produce about 120,000 tons in 12 months, but the possibility was not then pursued. A similar cut on American military shipments would produce something of the same order, but would require U.S. concurrence.

4. The Committee felt that the best course would be for the Viceroy to be asked to confer with Mountbatten and Auchinleck as to the measures possible within the limits of the existing shipping programme for India to meet the situation created by the shortfall in grain imports. Before proceeding on this line they felt that the Chiefs of Staff should be consulted, since they recognised that whatever is done on this basis must have its effect on operations.

5. I have accordingly prepared a draft telegram to the Viceroy on the line agreed in the Committee. A copy of this is attached together with the paper considered by the Committee. If you approve the line proposed by the Committee I would suggest that this minute and the attached papers be referred to the Chiefs of Staff for immediate consideration. The draft telegram to the Viceroy, revised in the light of the comments of the Chiefs of Staff, together

with a draft of their complementary communication to Mountbatten, would then be brought up in the Cabinet for approval, if possible early next week.

L. S. AMERY

Enclosure to No. 530

DRAFT CYPHER TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO VICEROY

TOP SECRET

GUARD

Your telegram 1163–S[4] of 4th June. Cabinet have considered position resulting from President's reply and your further statement of Indian position.

2. Cabinet have decided that apart from the 200,000 tons already promised and a further 36,000 tons to replace grain lost in Bombay fire, shipping position remains such that it is impossible to meet your request. Peak operational demand on shipping will not be reached for a month at least and will stand at peak level for some months thereafter. It is not merely that no savings can be made from this end, but that even if savings were possible they are mortgaged several times over for operational demands of highest priority.

3. Cabinet recognise seriousness of Indian position but they cannot of course contemplate the alternative that food requirements of the forces based on India should not be met. There is therefore no alternative but that you should re-examine in consultation with Mountbatten and Auchinleck the resources, including shipping already allocated to you and South East Asia Command, and make such recommendations as you can agree upon to meet the situation. We do not refer primarily to intensified measures of procurement and the like in the civil sphere, though you will no doubt re-examine the position in regard to them also. We are referring rather to any device you and the military commanders can conceive to divert shipping from military purposes to food imports, or to reduce the military requirements for food. You will probably have to strike a balance between the risks involved in the following courses or possible combinations of them:

(1) Cutting shipments of military supplies to provide shipping space for food. A 10% cut was contemplated in paragraph 11 of your telegram 459–S[5] of 3rd March and this was estimated to produce 120,000 tons in 12 months. It may be necessary now to consider the consequences of even larger cut.

(2) Taking measures which would reduce defence requirements of food.

[1] A copy of the minutes of this meeting (I.F.R.(44) 5th meeting) is on L/E/8/3323.

[2] See No. 524.

[3] Not printed. This was a memorandum (I.F.R.(44) 6) which Mr Amery had prepared for consideration by the Committee on Indian Foodgrain Requirements. Its Appendix III was the same as No. 526.

[4] No. 526. [5] No. 408; the date should be 4 March.

(3) Accepting the risk of reduced provision for the civil population with consequent possible ill effects on military performance.

4. It will clearly be necessary to take the Americans into consultation in regard to reduction of military shipments as without a contribution from them the amounts resulting would not be adequate. Chiefs of Staff are authorising Mountbatten to consult Stilwell or bring him or his representative into the conference as may be thought desirable.

5. H.M.G. would be glad if you would report result of this consultation and your joint recommendations, together with the consequences in the operational field. They must make it clear that any shipping diverted from military purposes to shipment of food could not be replaced within any foreseeable time.

531

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND TOP SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *8 June 1944*
Received: 14 June

We had a meeting of the Foodgrains Committee yesterday to consider the President's refusal to help[1] and your telegraphic restatement[2] of the situation. We discussed the possibility of an immediate delegation to Washington consisting of myself, Srivastava and Mudaliar (the latter in connection with the hardly less urgent question of rolling stock), but the general feeling of the Committee concurred in Leathers' view that it was absolutely no use at this stage trying to extract any ships from the Americans, while he on his part is equally at the end of his tether, though he has managed to scrape up 36,000 tons to meet the losses at Bombay. The Committee consequently came to the conclusion that whatever is found for India must now come out of a reallocation of existing military and civil shipping to India and that it is for you, Auchinleck and Mountbatten to come to some agreement as to how the risk and sacrifice of existing needs is to be met.

2. Obviously that is likely to raise the question of cutting down present strategical plans and, if so, no doubt that will ultimately have to come to the Combined Chiefs of Staff in Washington and they will then be faced with the clear alternative of acquiescing in the reduction of military operations in your part of the world or somehow finding ships at the expense of other military operations. What I cannot help feeling, but what it is no use telling the Americans, is that they are far from economical in the use of their ships and could in

fact find a certain number of ships without real prejudice to military operations. I did strongly urge the point that shipping casualties generally have been steadily reduced and that, at any rate up to date, the invasion has been singularly free from losses at sea. But Leathers is convinced that the Second Front is going to absorb more and more and that the peak of its demand has by no means yet been reached.

3. I am not clear in my mind how Stilwell is to come into this picture, unless indeed Mountbatten is to tell him definitely that his operations are to be cut down or stopped, and that if he wants that decision modified he must get the ships for his food from his own people. That applies, of course, even more to the rumoured demand for large increases in his forces, as well as to increases in the Chinese under him.

4. I am indeed sorry that there seems no immediate hope of relieving your grave anxieties in this matter other than by persuading Auchinleck and Mountbatten to agree to such a reduction in their demands as will involve a major strategical issue here and in Washington. Meanwhile, you and the two Commanders-in-Chief will have received telegrams from here on this subject before this letter reaches you.

5. I ought to add that Firoz was present at the Committee meeting yesterday; but I am asking him not to write to any of his colleagues about it so as to avoid creating premature alarm.

[Para. 6, on Sir G. Cunningham's proposed visit to Paiforce, omitted.]

7. I have had your telegram[3] reporting that the high feeling in Bengal over the Education Bill may upset the Ministry. I know you feel that there would be advantages in a period of Section 93 administration if it should come to that, so I do not feel unduly perturbed, but on the long term view I still feel it will be a pity if Ministerial Government fails. If it does, I should be glad if I could have by telegram sufficient details of the circumstances to deal effectively with the matter in Parliament.

[Para. 8, on smuggling in Baluchistan, omitted.]

9. The occupation of Rome has almost been forgotten in the tremendous and terribly anxious opening up of the Second Front in France. It is the reversal, as the papers generally have noted, of Dunkirk, four years afterwards almost to the day. Historically it is perhaps even more interesting, as the reversal of an invasion started in 1066 from this very same strip of coast that we have just seized. On that occasion the invaders, mostly Normans, but with a good sprinkling drawn from all over the place, regarded themselves as a crusade, blessed by the Pope, and historically they did indeed reconquer this island for the Latin culture

[1] See No. 524. [2] No. 526. [3] See No. 527, note 10.

and civilisation. This time we are reconquering the continent of Europe for that same civilisation. There are even interesting details. You will remember that the knight who rode at the head of William's army at Hastings was Taillefer, which being translated into German is Eisenhower, while William's right wing was commanded by Montgomery. I think I am right in saying that there was a Wavell in that show too, while the barons of Poitou and Maine on the inside left were commanded by Amery of Thouars. I am afraid neither of these names figures in this operation, except as outside flank guards, yourself in India and Julian somewhere in the mountains of Albania.

So far all seems to have gone at least as well as expected, in spite of rough seas, and, if so, it has been largely due to the belated development of airborne troops which you and I both pleaded for vainly three years ago. I think Brown-ing has every cause to congratulate himself on his unwearied efforts to get something in the nature of an airborne force created here. Of course, the whole situation will remain anxious for a good long time and indeed until we can make quite sure that this is not going to be merely an enlarged bridgehead from which we can neither break out nor retreat. But there is always the hope of its opening out into real free warfare in which our tanks and air supremacy should give us a great opportunity.

[PS., on a letter received by Mr Amery from Mr C. Grant, omitted.]

532

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 74th Conclusions, Minutes 1 and 2

Those present at this meeting held at 10 Downing Street, S.W.1, on 9 June 1944 at 11.30 am were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of items 1 and 2 were: Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell

Minute 1

L/S&G/7/262: ff 426–7

Recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and Indian Police

The War Cabinet had before them a Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 287)[1] proposing, as soon as military considerations permit, the resumption of recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police broadly on the lines hitherto followed, but subject to two modifications: (i) the

inclusion in the regulations of a clear warning that candidates recruited under them would be liable to have their appointments terminated at any time after an appropriate period of notice if, as a result of constitutional changes, it became necessary to dispense with their services, and (ii) that the appointment of recruits would no longer be on the basis of pensionable service but of contribution to a provident fund, combined with the assurance of a gratuity in the event of such discharge, graduated according to the length of service rendered.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that whatever the future of the Indian constitutional question, it must be some years before Indian self-government could be an accomplished fact. In the meantime, it was essential that the efficiency of the Administration should be maintained. Besides the normal annual intake, it would be necessary to recruit a substantial number of men at the end of the war to fill accumulated vacancies. His proposals had the support of the Viceroy and of the Secretary of State's Advisers. The scheme suggested by Lord Linlithgow for an Imperial Overseas Service had been considered, but the objections to it had been thought decisive.

As regards the terms of service now proposed, the system of a provident fund already existed in the Indian railways and worked well. Its effect was to substitute a contributory provident fund for the ordinary superannuation scheme. The objection to direct recruitment on the old basis of full pension after 25 years' service was clearly that an announcement in that sense would be taken to mean that we contemplated no change in the Indian constitutional position for that period.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES said that in the colonial services, for what he might call the "crash recruitment" which would take place at the end of the war, he had in mind a five year renewable contract, but for permanent recruitment, permanent service terms would be offered. He felt very sceptical as to the terms proposed by the Secretary of State for India proving sufficiently attractive. He had not been consulted about the suggestion for an Imperial Service, but he would be most strongly opposed to the absorption in the Colonies of senior men from India, because of its effects on the prospects of the Colonial Service.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR said that the virtual administrative breakdown which had taken place in India during the war needed serious consideration. As a matter of policy we ought, not merely to continue at its present strength but materially to increase the European element in the Indian Services, and to take whatever steps were necessary to achieve that result. If men of really good quality were recruited, he did not feel that the Indian

[1] No. 522.

nationalists would make trouble about their retention. He did not, however, believe that the terms proposed would attract the right type of man. The possibility of interchangeability with the home service should not be too lightly dismissed, though he was conscious of the difficulties.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER said that the Treasury and the Civil Service Commission had not been consulted about the present scheme and suggested that they might be able to make a contribution of value. Recruitment for various forms of public service was carried out by the Commissioners and they would be very glad to help with advice. He agreed that the question of a degree of interchangeability with the Home Service, possibly for short periods and for secretariat work in India, merited examination.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE DOMINIONS favoured further enquiry into the question of interchangeability with other Services, and shared the misgivings which had been expressed about the terms offered.

After further discussion the War Cabinet agreed:—

(1) That it was essential to maintain European recruitment for the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police at its present strength and quality, and that whatever steps were necessary to secure this should be taken.

(2) That the Secretary of State for India should be invited to give further consideration, in consultation with the Treasury and the Civil Service Commission, to the terms and the basis of recruitment to secure this end, a further report being made to the War Cabinet in due course.

Minute 2

L/P&S/12/2636: ff 39–40

Indian Minister at Washington

2. The War Cabinet had before them a joint Memorandum by the Secretary of State for India and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (W. P.(44) 221).[2] The Memorandum stated that since the end of 1941 an Agent-General of the Government of India had been stationed at Washington. He was attached to the Embassy with the local rank of Minister. For a considerable time past the Agent-General had been encouraged by the Ambassador to handle a variety of political questions direct with the State Department. Lord Halifax now suggested that the Agency-General should be made into an independent Mission headed by a Minister. The late Viceroy had been strongly opposed to this proposal on the broad ground of principle, but the matter had been re-examined with the present Viceroy, and the Government of India now recommended that the proposed change should be made.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, while conscious of the objections that could be urged and which were set out in W.P. (44) 221, thought that there would be great advantage in the change which Lord Halifax had proposed, and which the Foreign Secretary was prepared to support.

A general discussion followed in the course of which the following points were made:—

(*a*) There was grave danger, if an independent Indian Mission were set up in Washington, of the United States Government pressing for diplomatic representation in India with results that might be very embarrassing.

(*b*) To give an independent status as proposed to the Indian Agent-General might involve risks of the Agent-General or the Government of India pursuing a policy on certain matter which did not accord with that of H.M. Government. The argument for the handling of matters of importance through London and the Foreign Office was a very strong one.

(*c*) Much turned on the personality of the incumbent of the post, and it was impossible to be certain that the right type of man, with the right outlook, would necessarily be forthcoming.

(*d*) The type of problem that affected India in the United States was not of sufficient magnitude or of a sufficient scale to render special representation necessary, while there was nothing to show that the change proposed was one to which first-class importance was attached by public opinion in India.

(*e*) It was urged, on the other hand, that there would be advantage, given the probability of further constitutional development in India, in starting without delay to build up a nucleus of trained Indian representatives in the foreign field, and that much weight must attach to the view of the Government of India and of the Ambassador in Washington.

After further discussion the SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS said that he was not himself enthusiastic about the proposal. As some difficulty was felt about it, he suggested that consideration of it should be postponed until Lord Halifax's next visit to this country. If the Ambassador then produced really convincing reasons, the matter could again be brought before the Cabinet.

X'

The War Cabinet—

Agreed with the course of action suggested by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs at 'X'.

[2] No. 475.

533

Sir D. Monteath to Sir E. Bridges

L/PO/6/111: f 19

INDIA OFFICE, *10 June 1944*

Dear Bridges,

I am sorry to have been some time in replying to your letter of the 23rd May[1] about the cessation of the arrangement whereby Mr Bruce represents the Australian Government at the War Cabinet, and the consequences of that development in regard to Indian representation. This unexpected alteration in the Dominion arrangements has put us in rather a difficult position.

You say in your letter that the Maharaja of Kashmir and Sir Firoz Khan Noon were invited to this country for a visit which would coincide with the meeting of the Dominion Prime Ministers and might last for another month. In actual fact, I do not think that anything was decided by the Cabinet as regards the duration of their stay, and Cabinet Conclusion W.M. (43) 130 of 22nd September 1943[2] simply approved the proposal that Indian representation at the Dominion Prime Ministers' Conference should be dealt with by arranging for the Indian representatives to return to the War Cabinet before the meeting was due to be held. The Government of India regard themselves as having a standing invitation, in the same way as other Dominions, to send representatives to the War Cabinet, and we did not feel it was possible to dictate to them how long their representatives should stay, nor was it possible, when the suggestion that Indian Representatives should again come to the War Cabinet was made to the Government of India, to say what the purpose of the visit was, as at that time the fact that a Dominion Premiers' meeting was to be held was secret. We therefore said nothing in regard to the duration of the visit. In January 1944 the Secretary of State was asked[3] by Sir Firoz Khan Noon by telegram how long he would be required to stay in London and told[4] Sir Firoz that this was a matter for the Government of India and that he should consult the Viceroy. It was privately suggested[5] to the Viceroy that the Representatives should not stay beyond July or August.

We have endeavoured to do what we can to expedite the departure of the Indian Representatives, but the best we have been able to arrange is that Sir Firoz Khan Noon will leave at the end of July and the Maharaja of Kashmir probably rather before that if it can be arranged for him to visit Indian troops in Italy on his journey back to India. I realise that this may be somewhat inconvenient, but I am afraid we see no possibility of getting rid of them earlier unless we tell them directly that they are no longer required and that their departure is desired, and this is hardly a practicable line. We must therefore reconcile ourselves to their continuing to appear in Cabinet till the end of July.

As regards the future, the position has been explained[6] to Lord Wavell. It was suggested to him that nothing should be done at any rate until some special occasion arose. The Viceroy has agreed[7] that there is no necessity for continuous Indian Representation but says that the educative value of these visits is great and that he would like later to send another Member of his Council and a Prince to London. I think we must consider this later if any special occasion arises. I presume it is not proposed to make any announcement here unless one is forced by a question in Parliament. If that should occur we should be glad to be warned as it will be desirable to warn the Viceroy.

Yours sincerely,

D. T. MONTEATH

[1] No. 514. [2] No. 133.
[3] In tel. 573 of 24 January from G. of I., Defence Dept. to S. of S. via War Office. L/PO/6/111.
[4] In tel. 91 of 27 January *via* Viceroy. *Ibid.* [5] In tel. 90 of 27 January. *Ibid.*
[6] See No. 518. [7] See No. 521, para. 1.

534

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 75

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 June 1944, 6 am*

525. Your private telegram of the 8th June, 1194–S.[1] Detention of Gandhi in Ahmednagar Fort. I could not agree to proposal without Cabinet approval (which I was about to seek at beginning of May when events took a different course) and I presume you would not wish me to trouble Cabinet until need for decision is more imminent. Circumstances will be different in material respects from those obtaining in April and if I am to approach Cabinet I should require an up to date statement of case in place of that put forward in Home Department telegram No. 4905[2] of 27th April.

[1] No. 529. [2] No. 479.

535

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *12 June 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 2nd June 1944.[1] I am glad Feroz is still enjoying himself and is making a good impression. He has a bad press in this country—

[1] No. 523.

his views are strongly disliked by the Congress and Hindus generally, and he is not an out-and-out Muslim Leaguer. But the Congress Press and the Muslim League papers are both very bad guides to sensible statesmanship and to the real opinion of India, I believe. I have seen a corrected version of his address to the Royal Empire Society in which some of his statements are rather too sweeping. But I do not think his speeches will have done any harm.

2. Gandhi is now expected to leave Juhu very shortly. I agree with you that we cannot predict what he will do. We had a discussion in Council last week about his correspondence from the Aga Khan's palace with Linlithgow, Maxwell, the Home Department and myself. Some of the letters are complaints about personal grievances such as the treatment of Mrs Gandhi. But there is a considerable volume of political correspondence, and the question was whether we should prohibit its publication, permit its publication by Gandhi if he asked for it, or publish ourselves. The decision of Council, which I thought quite right, was to do nothing until Gandhi informs us, as he probably will, that he intends to publish one, some or all of the letters. We should then agree and say that we propose to publish all the letters dealing with political matters. Mudaliar pointed out that, read as a whole, the letters are not impressive and that if they were all published at once, the press and public would soon get tired of them. On the other hand, if Gandhi were to release them one by one, interest in them might be maintained. The Home Department have sent you by the fast air mail bag the printed book[2] we considered in Council. They are now having the "political" letters printed by themselves, and will send you as many copies as they can for use if and when publication takes place here. One of the things we have to guard against is the telegraphing of unfair extracts or summaries by Press correspondents, and as the censoring of Press messages about the letters would be difficult, the best move seems to be to present editors with a copy of the full text. Bajpai has been sent a copy of the existing printed book, and will be given copies of the new pamphlet. The Home Department have telegraphed[3] to you about all this, and I am sure you will agree that the line taken is the right one. Read as a whole, Gandhi's long letters on political subjects are poor stuff—verbose, self-righteous, unpractical. You will remember his special effort of last summer[4] which runs into about 70 printed foolscap pages and consists largely of an unconvincing interpretation of inconsistent statements made by him from time to time.

3. I hope you will be able to overcome the difficulties about shipping for our essential food imports. I saw a private telegram[5] from Monteath to Jenkins about a possible visit to India by French of the Ministry of Food, or one of his senior officials. The idea was that if convinced of our needs for additional staff, the Ministry of Food might send us four experienced men to help the Food Department. I drafted the reply[6] to this telegram myself, as I did not want it

thought that additional staff would be a substitute for imports, or the despatch of French a reason for delay. There has been dangerous, and as I am afraid I think, deliberate procrastination already. I am in favour of a visit by French or some other senior civil servant from the Ministry of Food, as the better our food problem is understood at home, the more likely we are to get adequate help. Srivastava feels that at the Centre his Department is now fairly well organised and that the need for additional staff is mainly in the Provinces where procurement and distribution are still giving difficulty. If the Ministry of Food could find us some good men, they would probably be placed on the staff of the Regional Food Commissioners.

[Para. 4, on the proposal to establish a tripartite committee in India to scrutinise Indian non-military demands on the U.S.; and para. 5, on the appointment of a permanent Inspector-General of Hospitals in Indore, omitted.]

6. I am sorry Mackenzie King eluded you and you were unable to mention to him the franchise for Indians in British Columbia. This is a small matter, but Khare needs a few feathers in his cap, and it would have helped him if Mackenzie King had been willing to move.

The South African situation is still difficult to follow. Judging from press reports, there is a good deal of opposition both among South Africans and among the more extreme Indians to the ordinance which is to replace the Pegging legislation. But I have seen nothing new from Shafa'at Ahmad Khan since he telegraphed more confidently before I last wrote.[7]

The Australian Government have agreed to Paranjpye's appointment, which is now being gazetted, and I hope Khare will get him off to Australia as soon as he can.

[Para. 7, on an honour for the organiser of B.B.C. Indian programmes, omitted.]

8. I think Queen Mary would find G. D. Birla better company than J. R. D. Tata if she wishes to invite one of them to lunch. Tata is a pleasant enough fellow to meet, but I have not found him communicative, and as a casual acquaintance he is much the same as any other wealthy young man who has had a conventional education and turns himself out well. Birla, on the other hand, is a less conventional type. He has plenty to say, and whatever one may think of Marwari business men and their ways, he is well worth talking to. I think Queen Mary would have a very dull lunch with Tata and quite an interesting one with Birla.

9. Many thanks for your memorandum[8] on Imperial Preference. It seems to me that if we are to hold our own with countries such as the United States

[2] L/P&J/8/624. [3] 7691 of 8 June. *Ibid.* [4] See No. 51, note 1.
[5] 12747 of 6 June. L/E/8/3358. [6] 151–S.C. of 11 June. *Ibid.* [7] No. 527, para. 10.
[8] Not printed.

and Russia with their vast internal markets, we must go in for some form of co-ordinated effort within the Empire.

10. Casey is still having an uneasy time in Bengal. In his last telegram he says that the Speaker has failed to improve his control over the Assembly and that Nazimuddin will now move for his removal on the 14th or 15th June. Thereafter there will be an adjournment and the motion will be debated early in July. It may be necessary to prorogue the Assembly before the debate on the Secondary Education Bill is complete, and there is still the possibility that Nazimuddin's party will disintegrate. Casey feels that there would then be a strong case for Section 93, not on the ground that Nazimuddin's Government is inefficient, but on the more orthodox ground that parliamentary government has broken down.

In Orissa, there is no change in the relations between Parlakimedi and his Finance Minister, Godavaris Misra. But an immediate crisis has been averted by the postponement of a meeting of Parlakimedi's supporters which was to have taken place on 4th June to 1st July.

The Punjab remains calm, and Khizar's Muslim colleagues have forestalled their expulsion from the Muslim League by resigning. Glancy is worried about the possible activities of the Muslim League National Guards, a body formed by a reorganisation of the Muslim League volunteers, and thinks we should make it clear from the first that uniformed bodies of this kind will not be tolerated. I had already taken this matter up with the Home Department. The law as it stands prohibits drilling and other training of a military kind, and we may have to tighten it up.

[Para. 11, asking for Mr Amery's opinion on whether Indian airlines should be publicly or privately owned, omitted.]

12. Srivastava has met you over the Famine Enquiry Committee, and has agreed to appoint Homi Mody instead of Purshottamdas Thakurdas, and to take in Dr. Aykroyd as medical member if Russell is not willing to serve. I do not think that Homi Mody is an improvement on Purshottamdas. . . .

[The remainder of para. 12, containing personal comments; and para. 13, on Mr Amery's suggestion that Mr Linklater should be invited to write a book on the Indian Army, omitted.]

14. We came up to Simla on 9th June and expect to be here until the 27th. I do not care much for the place which is overcrowded and has few obvious amenities. But for the time being it is a pleasant change from Delhi. I have just heard that my son has been badly wounded in Burma. If they succeed in getting him out to a hospital in Eastern India, I shall fly off at once to see him.

The operations in the West seem to have started well.

13 June

I had a long talk this morning with Khizar on the Punjab situation. I think we shall have to take a very firm line with Jinnah to prevent communal trouble in the Punjab. I will write more fully in next letter. Just off to Delhi and shall fly to Assam tomorrow in hopes to see my son.

536

Sir E. Bridges to Sir D. Monteath

L/PO/6/111: f 17

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET, GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W.1,
PERSONAL *13 June 1944*

Dear Monteath,

Thank you for your letter of the 10th June[1] replying to mine of the 23rd May.[2] I note that you think that the Maharaja and Sir Firoz Khan Noon will be here until towards the end of July.

I ought perhaps to have told you when I wrote my letter of the 23rd May that the Prime Minister, while accepting the view that there can be no interference with the expectations on which the Maharaja and Sir Firoz were invited to this country, did indicate that he expected that the visit would only last about a month beyond the end of the meeting with the Dominion Prime Ministers.

I think that towards the end of this month I ought to tell the Prime Minister the position in regard to the length of the visit of the two Indian representatives. Perhaps, therefore, you could keep me in touch with any later developments. For my part, however, I do not imagine that anyone would dispute the view expressed in the concluding part of the penultimate paragraph of your letter of the 10th June.

Yours sincerely,

E. E. BRIDGES

[1] No. 533. [2] No. 514.

537

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *13 June 1944*
Received: 23 June

I am enclosing with this letter a copy of Penderel Moon's book *Strangers in India*,[1] which he has just published. You will remember that he resigned from the Punjab Civil Service in a somewhat disgruntled condition as a result of indiscreet criticisms of his which were at least as much criticisms of the Punjab Ministry as of the Government of India. I don't think anything else could have been done, though I was certainly sorry that he should be lost to the Service. The book undoubtedly is coloured in places by these events and is in many passages definitely unfair to the India Office and indeed to the whole conduct of affairs by the British generally in the past and by Linlithgow and others more recently. All the same, it is a most stimulating and thought-provoking book which goes to the heart of the Indian problem and is well worthy of your careful study.

2. His main conclusions indeed are that we should go back as much as possible upon the British judicial system, with its standing invitation to perjury, and still more go back on the British conception of government by democratic electoral methods, with its standing invitation to political corruption and administrative incompetence. His idea in fact is an improved version of government in the better administered States and he even goes so far as to suggest that, once Indians govern themselves, they may make their provincial governorships permanent or even hereditary. His general idea is not that the States should be assimilated to British India, but that in most respects British India should be assimilated to the States. This is an old idea—I remember an old uncle of mine eloquently advocating it to me in the 80's—but Moon puts it in a somewhat more modern guise.

3. He recognises, of course, that we cannot at one stroke undo all that we have done, and that must be even more a governing consideration for you and me. But it does strengthen the view, which I have long held, and I think put to you in the talks we had before you left, that we ought to distinguish more clearly in our minds between Indian nationalism—i.e. the desire that India should be governed by Indians, which is universal a bond of unity among Indians, and in the long run irresistible,—and our desire to give India democratic institutions, which so far has only accentuated the communal cleavage

and created machine-made politics. The practical conclusion to which my mind is leaning is that the important objects, in order of importance, are: (*a*) to get rid of Whitehall control to the utmost extent as soon as possible; (*b*) to Indianise at the top; (*c*) so to modify the democratic system as to diminish its powers for mischief.

I agree with all these objects, especially (a).
W.

4. As regards (*a*) and (*b*) they to some extent go together at the Centre. In other words, the more completely Indianised your Executive is the more difficult will it be for the Cabinet here to try and override it. That is not the least of the reasons why I, like yourself, favour having an Indian Finance Member. There is of course the difficulty of the communal balance, which Firoz has insisted on in conversation, adding that Jinnah entirely agrees. That might of course be met by still keeping two or three Europeans, but giving them other Departments than those held by them at present. The principle could also be carried out in the provinces by definitely going back on 1935 and having Governors with Indian Councils under the pre-1921 constitution. Whether either of these steps is feasible at the moment, or indeed can be reconciled in logic with renewed recruitment of European civilians and police, is another question. But illogical solutions can sometimes be made to work.

5. As regards (*c*) that may have to be left to Indians themselves when they come to frame their own constitution. It might, however, still be possible, if that process is long delayed, to insist on compulsory coalition governments; in other words, to convert into a positive and absolute injunction the preference for coalition governments hitherto indicated in Governors' instructions.

6. In this same connection, Moon, like Coupland, has a strong feeling that the constitutional salvation of India may come from the Princes. They not only stand to some extent outside the communal strife, but have in their Diwans men of much better practical judgment than the British India party politicians, and, last but not least, can easily find the necessary funds with which to start an enquiry and popularise it by means of a magazine or other literature. Is there any Prince or small group of Princes whom you could put up to the job [of] running their own All-India Constitutional Enquiry with perhaps someone like Krishnamachari, now out of a job, as chairman, beginning with a collection of facts and data and gradually working up to definite suggestions for a constitution?

7. Meanwhile, to come back to earth. The Cabinet on the 9th[2] considered my recommendations both for further recruitment and for the appointment of Bajpai as a full Minister. There was agreement to the former on general

[1] London, Faber & Faber, 1944. [2] No. 532.

principle, but considerable doubts expressed as to whether the terms would be attractive and I was told to discuss that aspect of the matter further with the Treasury and with the Civil Service Commission here, more particularly with a view to seeing whether some interchange with the Home Civil Service here cannot be arranged. I doubt if very much will come of it.

8. On the Bajpai business there was a good deal of criticism and the matter was in the end postponed in order to wait for Halifax, who will be here in a few weeks' time, as he was the original author of the suggestion. The weakness of my position with the Cabinet is inevitably that my proposals are regarded as purely departmental and that those who would in general terms favour them, more particularly on the Socialist side of the Cabinet, just say nothing; while the critics have their way. Still, things do move in the end.

[Para. 9, on a conversation with Colonel J. A. Appleton, omitted.]

10. I was much interested in the crime statistics which you sent me recently and to which you referred in paragraph 19 of your letter of the 16th May.[3] The war-time increases in crimes of violence, and particularly in dacoity, are indeed disquieting. I see that the increases are least at the two extremes of India, Madras and the North-West Frontier Province, though the latter retains the unenviable distinction of having by far the highest murder rate. The Sind figures, I suppose, include the outrages of the Hurs. I can well appreciate that the wide extension of dacoity in certain Provinces is a matter of concern to the Governors, and although law and order is a Provincial subject I am not surprised, particularly in view of your responsibilities towards the Section 93 Provinces, that you intend to keep [a] finger on the situation by means of periodic returns. These I should be glad myself to see.

[Para. 11, on the suggestion of founding an Indian Navy League, omitted.]

15 June

12. The food problem has now taken a new turn in that the Chiefs of Staff have informed the Prime Minister that there is no such thing as a fixed allocation to India and the S.E.A.C. for military requirements, but only the general allocation of shipping for all service needs and that they therefore propose to go into the question themselves in the first instance.[4] This may be all to the good, in so far as they have a wider area to draw upon for economies out of which the necessary shipping for wheat can be provided. Also they are definitely taking the line that finding the necessary food for the troops in India is a military priority. I understand that they may be reporting today, but I have no idea whether they will suggest a definite total saving which can be made without affecting the general strategy of the Eastern campaign, or how far the figure they suggest may fall short of what you consider essential. Very probably

you will hear by telegram before this reaches you. All these delays are very vexatious and must add greatly to your anxieties.

13. Your letter of June 6th[5] has just come in. I am sorry to hear that Dalal is thinking of displacing Hutton; but I dare say you may still be able to find useful work for him to do now that the Army have definitely retired him.[6] I have always felt that he had bad luck, first of all in being sent to a very difficult fighting command when he was in fact primarily a staff officer, and secondly that he never had an actual opportunity in that fighting command of showing whether he could handle it or not. But I entirely agree with you that you cannot be continually overriding your Ministers in these matters, as you point out in connection with the appointment of Sen as Press Adviser. You have in fact been able to intervene on my representations about Thakurdas, and I admit it was only with some reluctance and with a knowledge of your own difficulties that I pressed the point, in view of the importance which Parliament here is bound to attach to the Report of your Commission.

14. Censorship. I hope my long statement[7] in the House, which incidentally created some impatience by its length, may have been helpful from your point of view. It certainly was not apologetic.

15. Sorensen, no doubt put up to it by Dange or by Menon, has just asked me a vague question[8] about organisations subventioned by the Government of India. I told him that I could only enquire from India if he gave me some idea of what he was aiming at; but I have a strong suspicion that he is really after some grant which I imagine is being made to Roy's organisation or to his Federation of Labour. Their representatives over here may be coming to see me about their financial difficulties if they cannot get out of the country at an early date.

16. I have no doubt that you are right in the line you have taken about the case of Mazumdar and Mrs. Kripalani, though if she had not been a relation of Mazumdar's his harbouring her might well have been open to the charge of a political action against the Government and not merely of the holding of an

3 No. 510.

4 In tel. 565 of 26 June to Sir E. Jenkins, Mr Turnbull explained with reference to para. 1 of No. 531: 'Suggestion that Viceroy should confer with Mountbatten and Auchinleck as to possibility of finding shipping for food [see No. 530, para. 4] was not pursued because Chiefs of Staff advised that there was no separate long-term allocation of shipping for needs of India and South East Asia Command, but only a general one for all military maintenance requirements which is allocated monthly by War Office to the different Commands. They advised it was better to consider military shipping as a whole rather than to contemplate cuts in the Indian programme by itself.' L/E/8/3323.

5 No. 527.

6 [Note by Mr Amery:] I am not sure whether this is final in view of your latest telegrams but rather fear it.

7 *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 400, 8 June 1944, cols. 1491–2.

8 *Ibid.*, 15 June 1944, cols. 2119–20.

opinion. There is of course a clear distinction between an officer's private opinions, whatever they may be, and his taking any action, including talking freely, which is definitely prejudicial to the carrying out of Government policy.

17. Firoz showed me yesterday a development of his scheme for dividing British India into five main "States", making together the "United States of India", a title which is perhaps as good as any other and does not prejudice the Pakistan issue unduly. His idea is that we should impose this as a provisional constitution with foreign affairs, defence, customs and currency, under a Central Government nominated by the Viceroy, with a similarly nominated, i.e. by the five States, small Legislature: this to be imposed for 20 years, giving plenty of time for India to make up its mind whether to break up or to agree upon a more effective federation. In view of my criticism of the mess that railways, etc., might get into in the meantime he is improving his scheme by providing that certain other powers like railways should be centralised for 10 years. I told him that it was contrary to our present declared policy to impose any constitution and that if we were to do so, even if avowedly a provisional constitution with arrangements for its replacement by another, there would have to be definite evidence after [?in] the way of a failure to agree and of a widespread desire to hand the baby to us, even if only for the wet-nursing period. I also suggested that if he wanted his idea ventilated he had much better get some Prince or group of Princes to finance a fuller enquiry into all the details, which he has left in a very sketchy form, and into securing public attention by appropriate publicity.

538

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 326 (Proof)

L/PO/11/3: ff 6–7

Bengal

NOTE BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND MINISTER OF DEFENCE

10 DOWNING STREET, S.W.1, *17 June 1944*[1]

I circulate herewith, for the information of my colleagues, a letter I have received from Mr Casey about conditions in Bengal.

W. S. C.

Enclosure to No. 538

GOVERNMENT HOUSE, CALCUTTA, 20 *May* 1944

My dear Prime Minister,

You were good enough to tell me to write to you—and I am doing so after four months in this post.

My task here is all you said it would he—and more. There is almost indefinite opportunity for constructive work—short and long term. I've got to concentrate on the short term—to try to ensure that the 60 million people of Bengal are fed and quiet—so as to maintain a peaceful base for Mountbatten.

There are more problems to the square mile here than in any place that I've been. Many of them are not soluble in to-day's conditions—but there are enough that are possible to tackle, and worth tackling, to make life very full and worth while. Once again—I am extremely grateful to you for having given me the opportunity to work here. I could ask nothing better.

I do not know how much you remember of this place. In the book about Government House I find the following:—

> "Lord Curzon relates as a point of interest that in 1899 his subsequent colleague, Winston Churchill, who was very nearly being a member of his staff (presumably as an A.D.C., as he was then only 25 while Curzon himself was but 39) immersed himself for hours daily in his room in the South-East wing writing his book on the Omdurman Campaign."

One's standards have to be readjusted in India. Things move appallingly slowly. What would take a week with us, takes a month or two with them—which makes it the more necessary to think well ahead. The administrative machine in this Province is a sort of Heath Robinson affair that has been built up and added to and taken from. It is slow moving and inefficient—and hopelessly low in numbers and particularly in effectives. So that one's weapons are blunt.

The country is weighed down with lethargy, self-interest and a lack of civic sense in any form. Most of the British officials in Bengal are, in consequence, suffering from a sense of frustration and hopelessness—to which, fortunately, I have not yet succumbed.

I am endeavouring to set in motion a constructive enquiry into the whole Administrative machine in Bengal, which has proved itself unable to cope with modern conditions.

There is no doubt about the bitter schism between the Hindus and the Muslims. It is going on all round one, all the time—above ground and underground. I used to think it was make-believe, but it's not—it's almost a blood feud—and is likely to intensify as the bait of independence comes closer.

I've never been in a place before where bribery, corruption and intrigue are accepted as inevitable. There is no sense of public responsibility or civic sense amongst the Indians. I propose to institute an "Anti-Corruption" drive here before long. It may be quixotic—but I think we cannot tacitly accept the continuance of the present reign of venality any longer.

[1] The date of this War Cabinet Paper has been obtained from the Cabinet Office.

Food is the constant and most important problem. One lives from crop to crop.

There are probably about 10 million individual rice farms in Bengal, and the task of getting their surplus rice from such vast numbers of small hoards is clear. Up to now we have adopted a scheme based on the voluntary sale of surplus rice by individual farmers. This is working reasonably well in this year of bumper rice crops, but I am about to have investigated the possibility of a compulsory scheme of rice acquisition (appallingly difficult though it would be to implement) as the basis of our "Feed Bengal" plan for the future.

Bengal is probably just self-supporting in rice in a year of good crops. I say "probably" because agricultural statistics in Bengal up to the present are a mixture of guesswork and hearsay. Amongst the many reforms that I am trying to get under way is one to create a proper agricultural statistical organisation.

The immense population of Bengal was impressed on me by the fact that they consume well over 1,000 tons of salt a day.

The health of Bengal is bad (although not much worse than the pre-war average), and a big proportion of the people are debilitated by malaria and subject to periodic epidemic ravages of smallpox and cholera. About one hospital bed exists for every 100,000 of the population of Bengal—so that when an epidemic is on, it isn't so good. The only bright spot is preventive treatment by mass inoculation and vaccination, which we are pressing on with at a great rate. We have vaccinated 20 million people against smallpox in Bengal in the last six months and will have done 35 million by end of November. Twelve million inoculations against cholera have been done in Bengal in the last six months and a great many millions more will be done this year. Malaria is, of course, the greatest curse and you can't do anything about it except distribute quinine. All round, the health of Bengal is only a little worse than the average of pre-war years.

Bengal is the *enfant terrible* of India in many ways. Financially, this Province has had a very bad time in recent years, and has accumulated a heavy budgetary deficit, whilst all the other Provinces of India have piled up surpluses. Bengal's deficit is due to the heavy incidence of the war on the Province, plus famine and cyclone. I went to New Delhi lately, and represented all this to them—and came away, I am glad to say, with the promise of $5\frac{1}{2}$ crores of rupees ($£4\frac{1}{4}$ millions).

Terrorism isn't a problem at present—but solely because all (or so we believe) the terrorist leaders are locked up—1,300 of them in Bengal. Of this 1,300, only a dozen or so are Muslims and only one is a member of the depressed classes. The great bulk is Caste Hindu.

I have instituted a "Governor's Defence Committee" here—in order to provide a relatively high-level platform on which Eastern Command can discuss mutual problems with the members of the Bengal Government—with

myself in the chair. It is based broadly on the model of the Middle East Defence Committee—and is turning out a most useful body.

I won't speak of All-India problems—although one gets a good deal more than a proportionate share of them reflected in Bengal—in fact, I sometimes think that the Indian problem is the Bengal problem. I'm getting to the dangerous stage at which I'm beginning to feel that I know something about North-East India.

Sir Firoz Khan Noon was quoted here lately as having said to the Imperial Conference that . . . . "There are no two opinions in India so far as the maintenance of the ties with Britain and the prosecution of the present war are concerned. There is no one in India, not even Mr Gandhi himself, who does not want the United Nations to win. And there are no two opinions about the maintenance, when the war is won, of India's connection with Britain and with other Dominions." The Calcutta *Statesman* criticised this statement as having but little relation to reality—and as representing soothing syrup for United Kingdom consumption. I entirely agree with the *Statesman*. Indian concern with the war is practically entirely confined to their interest in not being invaded.

As to the future, it would be a brave man who would say that the majority of Indians want to remain within the British Commonwealth. At any rate, there is a complete lack of expression of any such sentiments in the Indian press. The vast mass of the dumb millions of India have no views at all—other than that they tend to like us and to trust us. The politically conscious Indians (I suppose not more than a million at the most) have not, so far as my brief experience goes, shown any indication of interest in anything beyond the lure of "independence"—and are rather cagey in expressing themselves on the subject of "Dominion Status" even in private conversation.

I get on well with Wavell and his senior people—and with my Muslim League Ministers. I think it is better to keep this Ministry in being than to run the place with direct government by the Governor.

I keep close touch with Mountbatten, Auchinleck and Slim, and with the Army and Air people generally, including the Americans. The senior people from the Burma front all come and stay with us here on their brief leave in Calcutta. We all realise that, as soon as the advance into Western Europe starts, the Burma front news will be relegated to the classified ads. columns.[2]

Yours sincerely,

R. G. CASEY

[2] In tel. 535 of 15 June, Mr Amery sent Mr Casey the following personal and secret message from Mr Churchill: 'I am deeply interested by your letter of May 20.' L/PO/11/3: f 9.

539

Mr Gandhi to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 50

NATURE CURE CLINIC, 6 TODDIWALA ROAD, POONA, *17 June 1944*

Dear Friend,

But for the fact that this letter is along the lines of your preoccupation I should not have troubled you with any letter from me.

2. Though there is little cause for it, the whole country and even many from outside expect me to make some decisive contribution to the general good. I am sorry to say my convalescence threatens to be fairly long. Even if I was quite well, I could do little or nothing unless I knew the mind of the Working Committee of the Congress. I pleaded as a prisoner for permission to see them. I plead now as a free man for such permission. If you will see me before deciding, I shall gladly go wherever you want me to, as soon as I am allowed by my medical advisers to undertake long distance travelling.

3. I have circulated among friends for private use, copies of the correspondence that passed between the authorities and me during detention. I do feel, however, that in fairness to me Government should permit its publication in the press.

My address will be as above till 30th instant.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 25 June 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State. Mr Gandhi's letter is reprinted in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, pp. 312–13.

540

Sir A. Clow (Assam) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/137: ff 80–1

No. 112 *19 June 1944*

5. I made a short tour, mainly for the purpose of making personal contact with 33 Corps and learning more of conditions in the Naga Hills, now almost free of the enemy. General Stopford was good enough to show me over the Kohima battlefield. The place is scarcely recognizable and even Pawsey, the Deputy Commissioner, had a little difficulty in finding his way in the ruins of the various office buildings. Everywhere there was evidence of the grim

fighting for the various hills. The whole scene is one of desolation which Stopford said reminded him of the Somme. The pleasant woods all along the skyline are reduced to shivered tree trunks with scraps of parachutes for foliage and all the open spaces are thick in mud and littered with bunkers and all the debris of war. There is a good deal of wire about now, but I was told that during the original siege the defenders had none, and the whole scene brought home to one the courage both of the defending and the relieving troops as well as the tenacity of the Japanese. The Deputy Commissioner's compound seemed to be a graveyard of men of the Dorsets, with a very few of his flowers still growing amid the mounds. Alone among the wreckage the Assam Rifles lines (which we had lent to be the I.G.H.) have managed, for the most part, to survive; they lay below the general line of fire.

541

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *20 June 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 8th June 1944.[1] When I last wrote[2] I was just off to Assam and we returned on 19th June bringing my son with us. He was wounded by a grenade or an explosive bullet while leading an attack near Mogaung, and has lost his left hand. We stayed with a planter named Gregory near Dinjan, and had to wait some days as the weather was bad for flying and my son had to take his turn with the other wounded. He is in very good heart, and after he has had a rest here, we hope to get him up to Simla. The arrangements for flying the wounded out of Burma make all the difference to the morale of the troops out in the jungle. The relations between the British and Americans in the Dinjan neighbourhood seemed good. This is largely due to the planters, who cheerfully put up with a great deal of inconvenience and damage, and seem to keep open house. Our host, Gregory, is the Superintendent of several tea gardens, and most American Generals visiting Dinjan seem to stay with him as a matter of course.

2. It is scandalous that we are making no progress about food imports after about six months' discussion. The information in your letter is supplemented by a recent telegram[3] from Turnbull to Abell, which explains that the Chiefs of Staff will take some time to decide what can be done and that the provision

[1] No. 531. [2] No. 535. [3] 540 of 16 June. L/E/8/3323.

of shipping cannot be left to Mountbatten and Auchinleck as the Foodgrains Committee seemed to think.[4] It seems to me astonishing that the Foodgrains Committee should not have known that the needs of the Indian theatre could not be considered by themselves. The objective of most of the Committee seems to be purely obstruction and delay. I have just sent you a private telegram[5] pointing out that we cannot go on like this, and that unless we are able to announce substantial imports almost immediately, the labour of the past year and more will be lost, and we shall find ourselves in serious difficulties at any time from now onwards. I have never believed that the tonnage required to enable me to deal properly with our food problem would make any real difference to operations in the West or here. A dozen ships would do the trick. If the statements about shipping losses from submarines of late months have any basis, we must have a very substantial margin of tonnage over estimates.

I send in this bag an interesting letter, dated June the 10th,[6] from Casey about rice procurement in Bengal. He has kept a close eye on this matter himself and the results are encouraging. But you will, I know, realise that any improvement in the Bengal situation does not affect our most urgent need of wheat imports.

3. I have repeated to you Casey's latest telegram[7] about his troubles in Bengal, and my reply.[8] It seems that Nazimuddin now admits that he cannot deal with the Speaker, and that the debate on the motion for his removal might drag on indefinitely. I did not like the idea of a dissolution followed by a General Election; and legislation in Parliament to give Governors the power to remove the Speaker and to deal with connected matters also seemed to me out of the question. Casey has since told me that he was wrong about the Standing Orders, which have worked well enough on the whole in other Provinces, so I was right in my view that the real trouble was the personality of the Speaker rather than the rules under which he worked. The suggestion that action might be taken against the Speaker under the Defence of India Rules was obviously unacceptable. It follows that if Nazimuddin cannot face the music and proceedings in the Assembly become impossible, Casey will have to go into Section 93. I hope to have a personal discussion with him before he does so; it would be easy enough for him to fly up here to see me. I agree with you[9] that present conditions in Bengal are quite different from those of last January when I proposed Section 93; but although we may now be technically on better ground, we should in January have had public opinion behind us, while now we shall not. A move into Section 93 in Bengal would be regarded by the Muslim League as another hostile act by the Central Government, and there will be a good deal of talk by leading Bengal Hindus and by Fazlul Huq and his friends about the possibility of an alternative Ministry.

4. The disputes between the Chief Minister of Orissa and his colleague Pandit Godavaris Misra have not been settled, and Lewis seems to think that the Ministry may break up early in July. Parlakimedi seems to have burnt his boats by publishing a "charge sheet" against the Pandit. As far as I can make out, none of the charges (there are eleven of them) is serious, and it is generally believed that Parlakimedi has been egged on by one of the Pandit's political rivals. The case is clearly one of personal friction and little more. "Tweedledum and Tweedledee agreed to have a battle."

5. I mentioned in a postscript to my last letter a talk with Khizar on the Punjab situation. He is apprehensive about two things—the Muslim League National Guards, and Jinnah's use of religious propaganda. I told you in paragraph 10 of my last letter that I was going into the question of the Muslim National Guards, who may be a great nuisance unless we deal with them now. According to Khizar, Jinnah is importing into the Punjab a number of Maulvis from the United Provinces to agitate against the Unionist Government on religious lines. He would like the Central Government to relieve him of the obligation of keeping these people out, and he would, I think, like to keep Jinnah and other prominent Muslim leaders out of the Punjab too. The difficulty is that the Punjab Government have all the powers they need but that Khizar does not feel strong enough to use them. I will have a talk with Glancy at the first opportunity. In the meantime the Muslim League are complaining that the Punjab Government have used permanent officials to obstruct and prevent Muslim League activities.

[Para. 6, on smuggling in Baluchistan, omitted.]

7. Gandhi has now moved to Poona, and there have been two developments of some importance since I last wrote. He secured publicity for the correspondence referred to in paragraph 2 of my last letter by circulating copies of it privately to various people, including editors of newspapers, and his correspondence with me has already appeared in full in the press. He did not ask my consent before circulating the correspondence, and, as you know,[10] we now propose to publish our own pamphlet[11] without further reference to him.

[4] See No. 530, para. 4.

[5] 1261–S Guard of 20 June in which Lord Wavell pressed again for an immediate decision on imports and stated that 'unless substantial imports are announced crisis may occur at any time between now and end of August.' L/E/8/3323 : f 110.

[6] L/E/8/3362. [7 and 8] L/P&J/8/652.

[9] Mr Amery had expressed this view to Lord Wavell in tel. 13674 of 16 June. *Ibid.*

[10] G. of I., Home Dept., tel. 8112 of 18 June informed the S. of S. that it had been decided in Council, Lord Wavell being absent, that the G. of I. should proceed to publish their pamphlet as soon as possible, announcing a day or two beforehand that they intended to do so in view of the fact that a portion of the correspondence had already appeared in the press. L/P & J/8/624.

[11] *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi August 1942–April 1944* (New Delhi, Government of India Press, 1944).

On 20th June I received a letter[12] from Gandhi suggesting that he should be permitted to see the members of the Working Committee and that he might have an interview with me before doing so. He says in his letter that he has circulated the correspondence, and adds, rather impudently, that he would like my consent to its being published.

I am replying that as our exchange of letters showed a fundamental difference of opinion, I do not think there would be any value in a meeting; and that I cannot permit him to see the members of the Working Committee. I am adding that as he has already published his correspondence with me, I consider myself free to publish the remainder of the letters without reference to him.

8. In paragraph 6 of my letter of 30th May 1944,[13] I mentioned an alleged statement by Dr B. C. Roy and an intercepted letter from him to a friend which indicated that he had "cooked" his report on Gandhi's health under pressure from the Bombay Secretariat. The Bombay official concerned was Iengar, and Colville has reported that Dr B. C. Roy's statements are quite untrue; that the move to see Gandhi came from him and not from the Bombay Secretariat; and that no suggestion of any kind about the nature of his medical certificate was made to him by Iengar. Colville acquits Iengar completely, and Dr B. C. Roy must be telling lies. I am afraid we cannot bring his conduct home to him—our only evidence is the report of a "source" whose identity cannot be disclosed, and an intercepted letter of which we have no photostat copy. So the matter is now being dropped.

9. In paragraph 11 of my letter of 30th May I mentioned the documents[14] sent me by Sapru after the Non-Party Conference and the reply[15] I sent him. Sapru has now acknowledged my reply and says he will write again. I do not think we can expect anything constructive from him.

[Para. 10, acknowledging Mr Amery's postscript to No. 531, omitted.]

My immediate programme has been thrown out of gear by the Assam trip, but I hope to go to Simla again about 12th July. Delhi is cooler than it was, but still quite hot enough.

[12] No. 539. [13] No. 521. [14] See No. 481. [15] No. 520.

542

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *21 June 1944*
Received: 30 June

Your further anxious telegram[1] about food just received. The whole question is to come up before the Chiefs of Staffs tomorrow on a strong recommendation from the administrative officers who have advised the release of shipping to carry 200,000 tons from Australia in the third quarter of the year, by a general squeeze on maintenance and other supplies for the forces, leaving the matter to be reconsidered from the point of view of further shipments early in August and again in November. Naturally, from your point of view, it would be far better if they could make a recommendation for the whole of the next nine months, or even for six months; but they are faced with operational demands the effect of which they cannot yet calculate. On the other hand, the situation in Italy and the Mediterranean may make economies possible in that direction by August. Anyhow, the whole matter must now come before the Cabinet in the next few days and I must do all I can.

2. I have seen the deputation from the Indian Federation of Labour, consisting of Mr Karnik, Miss Kara, and Mr M. A. Khan. Their chief anxiety was that Labour should be more effectively represented both in the administration and in the Legislature. They suggested that representatives of Labour might be included in Dalal's planning staff and that you might, as soon as opportunity offered, fill nominated vacancies in the Assembly and Council of State by Labour representatives. They also expressed the hope that merchant seamen's welfare should be transferred from its present department to Labour. They left a memorandum[2] with me which I promised I would send on to you for your sympathetic consideration. I assured them that your appointment of Dalal in no way committed you to an uncritical acceptance of the Bombay Plan and that the Democratic Federation's plan, and indeed every other, would be carefully studied. Their idea is to stay here for another month and get as much as possible in touch with the trade union world and with the public generally.

* * *

22 June

PS.—What I have said in the first paragraph of this letter is of course conditional upon whether the Chiefs of Staff, in view of pending operations, are prepared to endorse the administrative officers' recommendation and whether, if so, the

[1] See No. 541, note 5. [2] Not printed.

Cabinet will agree. I can only hope for the best, but have thought it as well to let you know at once the stage which things have reached, as it may help you in understanding telegrams which may come in about the same time.

PS. 2.—I am glad that your worst anxieties about your son have been relieved and that you have been able to get him back and properly looked after. . . .

543

Sir H. Dow (Sind) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/260: ff 97–8

GOVERNOR'S CAMP, ZIARAT, BALUCHISTAN, *21 June 1944*

No. 182–F.R.

8. Although there is nothing overtly communal in the Bill,[1] it owes its promotion to the idea prevalent generally among Muslims that land held by Muslims is rapidly passing into the hands of non-agriculturalist Hindus. The Minister ought to have dropped the idea of a Bill as soon as he found that statistics did not support this popular impression. Propaganda by the Muslim ministers has however been on the simplest communal lines: and in the mofussil, the Muslim Zamindar vaguely thinks this is a Bill to transfer all land held by Hindus to Muslims, and there will be a good deal of disillusionment when its actual scope is understood.

9. Pir Illahi Baksh, Education Minister, has for some time been anxious to set up a Sind University, and is pressing for the introduction of a Bill next July on the lines of the Orissa University Bill. I should like to help forward the project of a separate Sind University, the case for which is at least as strong as that for a separate Sind Province; & if Sind is to remain a separate & predominantly Muslim Province I do not see why she should agree indefinitely to have all her educated classes turned out on the pattern approved by the Bombay University, which is mainly a Hindu controlled body. I expressed my own views on this question in the report of the Sind Administrative Committee over which I presided ten years ago, & find that I have not altered them much. But Pir Illahi Baksh is mainly concerned in going down to history as the man who started the Sind University, & is quite sure that however unsatisfactory it is to start with, it is bound to grow better & bigger as time goes on. His idea is simply to forbid all affiliations of Sind educational institutions with Universities outside the Province, & to use the matriculation fees now paid to the Bombay University for paying examiners who will confer the Sind University's degrees. The Sind University Senate would, of course, have

a large Muslim majority, & the curriculum would be given a sort of Koranic twist which would make it easier for Muslims to get degrees.

10. The Premier distrusts these proposals, & has argued, very sensibly, that the present time is unsuitable for setting up a University, & that we should concentrate on improving our colleges & increasing facilities for Muslim teaching institutions. I have spent long hours trying to persuade the Minister that his proposals are reactionary & are bound to start a first class communal agitation. He however points to the Orissa Bill, & will not see that the hiving off of one predominantly Hindu University from another (Patna) is a very different thing from setting up a predominantly Muslim University by breaking away from the traditions of the mainly Hindu University of Bombay. The Premier (I agree with him) thinks that the establishment of a Sind University must be preceded by winning the confidence of the Hindu minority community, which is at present, in matters of education, very much the majority community. But Pir Illahi Baksh is a hard narrow bitter little man, & insists on taking his ideas to Council for an immediate decision. In view of my Premier's sensible attitude, & as it is a matter in which I cannot enforce my views against the decision of my ministers, I have thought it wise to allow the question to be discussed in a Council Meeting at which I shall not be present, & over which my Premier will preside. Pir Illahi Baksh is anxious to carry his Bill through the July session, but he has probably left it too late for this to be possible.

[1] Sir H. Dow had been discussing a Land Alienation Bill sponsored by K. B. Khuhro which was intended to prevent smallholders with less than 96 acres from alienating their lands at all and restricted the alienation of larger acreages.

544

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Gandhi[1]

L/P&J/8/623: f 49

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *22 June 1944*

Dear Mr Gandhi,

I have received your letter of June 17th.[2] In consideration of the radical difference in our points of view which appeared in our recent correspondence,[3] I feel that a meeting between us at present could have no value and could only raise hopes which would be disappointed.

[1] Enclosed in the letter of 25 June 1944 from the Private Secretary to the Viceroy to the Private Secretary to the Secretary of State.

[2] No. 539. [3] Nos. 387, 400, 417, 445, and 455.

I am afraid that similar considerations apply to your request to see the Working Committee. You have recently made public your adherence to the Quit India resolution, which I am afraid I do not regard as a reasonable or practical policy for the immediate future.

If after your convalescence and on further reflection you have a definite and constructive policy to propose for the furtherance of India's welfare, I shall be glad to consider it.

Since you have circulated, without any reference to me, the correspondence which passed between us and it has in consequence appeared in the Press, I have given instructions for the publication of the whole of the political letters which were written during your detention.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

545

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 64

PRIVATE *23 June 1944*

1282–S. Paragraph No. 17 of my private letter 30th May.[1] Committee on Bengal Administration. I am sending by next bag copy of Casey's letters of 24th May and 19th June.[2] Casey wishes to appoint strong Committee with wide terms of reference to recommend administrative reforms for Bengal. He presses for first class Chairman from Home and suggests someone of the calibre of Anderson when he was selected for Bengal Governorship. He would be grateful if you would consult Anderson as an ex-Governor of Bengal and advise whether suitable Chairman can be found. Casey is quite prepared to accept man with Colonial or Dominions experience, but real eminence and wide administrative knowledge are essential. I suggested that Woodhead might stay on after completing famine enquiry or that Thorne might serve after vacating Home Membership. Casey considers that Woodhead's selection would involve undue delay and that Thorne hardly carries the guns. I should be grateful for earliest possible advice.

[1] No. 521. [2] Not traced in India Office Records.

546

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/513: ff 308–10

CHASHMASHAHI HOUSE, SRINAGAR, KASHMIR, *23 June 1944*

My dear Lord Wavell,

On the 6th of June, 1944[1] I wrote to Your Excellency acknowledging your letter, D.O. No. F. 125/25/GG/43,[2] dated Naini Tal 28th May, 1944, and said in the course of my reply that I would carefully think over various aspects of the question raised by me in the Memorandum[3] submitted by me and referred to in your letter of 28th May. I have been thinking over these points and am now in a position to write to you fully. I know how precious your time is. I should be most reluctant to encroach upon it, but I also realise that the political issues raised by me in the Memorandum are issues in which the entire country is vitally interested even though there may be some differences of opinion between the different parties or different groups of public men in regard to the precise remedies to be applied.

As regards the suspension of democratic institutions in section 93 provinces you have reminded me that it was due to the refusal of the majority party in each of the provinces concerned to remain in office for reasons which had nothing to do with the provincial administration. I do not wish to disguise from you—and my views are pretty well known—that I deeply regretted the decisions of the majority parties in the provinces to withdraw from office. I still hold that view. The practical question, as I view it, however, is whether for an error of judgment on the part of one party committed five years ago, even though it may be the majority party, the whole of the country, or at any rate the whole of the electorate, should continue for such a length of time to be deprived of their constitutional right to voice public opinion in duly constituted legislative bodies and of the right to have popular governments in charge of those matters of administration and legislation which were assigned to the provinces by the Act of 1935. The resort to section 93 of the Government of India Act may have been necessitated at the time by the withdrawal from office on the part of the majority party, but I scarcely think it was within the contemplation of Parliament that the resumption of powers by Governors under section 93 would necessarily be so complete or so prolonged. Under section 93, as I read it, it would be open to a Governor not to have Ministers and to have in their places Members of Executive Councils or Advisers and yet to allow the legislatures to continue to function so that the representatives of the people might discharge their duties at least to the extent to which they used to under the Minto–Morley Reforms. I am giving this only as an illustration.

[1] Not printed. [2] No. 520. [3] No. 481.

He could also maintain Ministers and impose certain limitations on their powers. On the other hand he could, (as has happened in several provinces), refuse to have Ministers and legislatures. As matters stand, we have neither Ministers nor legislatures; and all the powers of legislation, taxation and administration are vested in the hands of the Governor. I hope I am not doing injustice when I say that constitutionally the position of an Adviser is not the same as that of an Executive Councillor.

I should be untrue to myself and untrue to you if I were to withhold from you my frank opinion that section 93 administrations are not only not popular but do not command the confidence of the people at large. I also venture to add that Indian opinion cannot subscribe to the view that section 93 administrations have shown that regard for public opinion which the people of this country have for at least a quarter of a century been accustomed to expect. I am aware that the Bombay Government, as you say, has introduced "the most progressive food administration in India", but even from Bombay I have heard some complaints, and even the credit which goes to Bombay cannot be claimed by the other section 93 provinces. The point to my mind, however, is not whether any particular section 93 administration has done well in regard to any matter but whether there is any justification for any longer keeping the Constitution under suspension.

I believe that it would not be difficult to set up Coalition Ministries in some provinces at least. I cannot, however, speak for the majority party and say whether under the existing conditions they would be prepared to assume the responsibility of office. Nevertheless I feel very strongly (and I am not speaking without the book), that though the majority party may possibly decline to assume the responsibility of office, it will not probably stand in the way of other parties forming Governments and it will offer no unnecessary obstruction, so long as those who hold office reflect public opinion in their actions and discharge their duties fairly and wisely. It is not by any means impossible to arrive at understandings and conventions which may smoothen the work of those who may form Coalition Ministries. But if it is demanded from those who may offer in the existing circumstances to form Governments that they must assure Governors that they possess behind them absolute majorities in the legislatures, then it will practically amount to rejecting the proposal. I have reasons to believe that at one time some members of the legislature in the United Provinces thought on these lines. But they could not proceed with their scheme because, having regard to the composition of the legislature, they could not guarantee an absolute majority of members behind them. When I am back in Allahabad, I shall advise some of my friends, who are in the legislature, to take suitable steps but I am not all sure that they can guarantee an absolute majority in the House which, in the existing circumstances, seems an impossibility.

As regards the National Government at the Centre, I am aware of the objection held in high quarters to drastic constitutional changes in war-time. I do not think, however, that it is impossible to set up a National Government which might and probably would take the shape of a Coalition Ministry under the framework of the present Constitution by adopting conventions and alterations in some rules which would by no means be inconsistent with the existing Act. Of course when one bears in mind the mixed composition of the present central legislature consisting of elected and non-elected members, such a Government will not be a National Government in the true sense of that phrase, but it can be made the nearest approach to it. Speaking for myself, I should do nothing to weaken the position of the Commander-in-Chief in relation to defence, or to take any steps which might interfere with the effective prosecution of the war. I, however, feel that changes at the Centre even within the framework of the existing constitution can be brought about without imperilling the safety of the country or without interfering with the effective prosecution of the War by suitable conventions and by securing in fact and in practice as full a measure of freedom for the Government of India from outside control as may be possible.

I do not think that there is necessarily a conflict between a National or a Political Government and a Business Government. I venture to think that a National Government, such as I envisage it to be, will consider its duty to devote its energies to the great administrative problems during the war and to the preparation for post-war economic development, but I feel very strongly that if you want to make it a real success in the country, it must have the unstinted support and backing of its political leaders, as it will touch the life of the people and the whole organisation of society at so many points. I fully realise the importance of a body being formed to study political problems for a permanent settlement and to provide the means of a change-over, but I venture to think in this connection that such a body formed by a Government, which has not the support or backing of its political leaders, has little chance of producing a favourable impression on the minds of the people at large. I should welcome such a body if it could be set up by a Government of the character I have indicated above.

I must apologise to Your Excellency for the length of this letter, but I thought that it was only due to your position as the head of the Government that I should freely and frankly place my views before you. I am most anxious that the sense of frustration and disappointment which has overtaken the people should disappear, as to my mind it is dangerous to allow this feeling to continue any longer.

I came here mainly for the sake of my son, who has been ailing for the last 8 months. Fortunately his case has now taken a turn for the better and I shall be leaving him here in charge of his doctors until September when I shall come

back. In the meantime I shall return to Allahabad on the 3rd of July reaching there on the 5th.

Yours sincerely,
TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

547

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE *24 June 1944*
TOP SECRET

No. 1288–S. Guard. Personal for Prime Minister from Viceroy. I am unwilling to add to your burden, but conditions here are such that I must approach you personally for help over food imports. I have done all I can during past eight months to improve our price and distribution controls for foodgrains and to stimulate production, and have had some success. But I have never ceased to impress on His Majesty's Government that India could not carry on without very substantial imports of foodgrains. We have gap between our minimum requirements and resources in sight of something like two million tons; most of my Governors are gravely anxious, and it is clear that without delivery of minimum of 750,000 tons of imported wheat over and above anything yet promised, by end of March 1945 we shall not succeed in averting disaster. Wheat is the grain with greatest influence on markets generally. The knowledge of substantial imports of wheat will bring into market not only wheat but other grains which at present are being withheld.

2. The following are my considered conclusions on a problem which has been foremost in my mind since I became Viceroy:—

First.—If we do not get the imports demanded procurement programme will fail (as it already seems likely to do in Punjab) whole food structure will break down including price control and rationing of large towns. There will be unmanageable shortage and famine with disastrous effect on economic life of India, industrial effort, transportation and law and order.

Second.—Even though operations from India may be secondary to those in Europe and the Pacific the troops here must be fed, and their Commanders cannot operate with confidence from base liable to starvation and serious outbreaks of disorder. The Japanese menace to India has been scotched but not yet entirely killed and hungry India will give it another chance.

Third.—His Majesty's Government's attitude if maintained can, and will, be represented with reason as both short-sighted and callous. India has made

great efforts in the Allied cause during the war, and the poorer classes have borne uncomplainingly much hardship and suffering. Without India's help the Allies would not now be in a position to invade the Continent of Europe or to threaten Japan. It would be a poor reward to condemn many hundreds of thousands of Indians to starvation.

Fourth.—It would be comparatively easy for His Majesty's Government to help India now. The number of ships to be allocated would not be large. But to retrieve a breakdown would be a very different matter. And a breakdown would finally destroy in my opinion the prospect of maintaining India as a willing partner in the Empire.

3. I am clear that a decision is needed in a matter of days. The Punjab wheat is not coming in as it should and only the certainty of large imports will bring it into the markets and restore public confidence in His Majesty's Government's intentions which is the primary need.[1]

[1] In tel. 560 Guard of 24 June to Sir E. Jenkins, Mr Turnbull explained he was holding the above tel. until Lord Wavell had seen No. 548 and he asked whether Lord Wavell still wished the tel. to be sent to Mr Churchill. In tel. 1293–S Guard of 25 June, Sir E. Jenkins replied that the Viceroy did wish the tel. to be sent on together with the substance of his 1292–S Guard of 25 June. In this tel. Lord Wavell stated that while the food imports decision was not entirely satisfactory, he would do his best. L/E/8/3323: ff 92, 89, 87.

548

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: ff 95–6

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *24 June 1944, 9.15 pm*

TOP SECRET

14201. Guard. Your telegram 1163–S[1] dated 4th June. Deterioration in foodgrains position disclosed in your telegrams of 19th April[2] was urgently considered by H.M.G. and in view of the then existing and impending calls on British controlled tonnage a request[3] for help made to the United States. Reply[4] received to this representation did not advance matters and further careful consideration here made it abundantly clear that no British controlled shipping could be made available to carry Indian wheat imports unless corresponding reductions were made in tonnage calculated to cover existing authorised military programmes and operational requirements. Operational requirements cannot be reduced and the Military authorities here accordingly re-examined tonnage allocated for maintenance and have recommended that in view of

[1] No. 526. [2] No. 466; see also No. 470, note 4. [3] See No. 486. [4] See No. 524.

India's pressing requirements for grain and grave risk to military operations which would ensue from a recurrence of famine conditions, certain sacrifices leading to a diminution in military maintenance programmes should be accepted. Further examination in detail has led to the conclusion that by taking advantage of recent improvements in stock position and exercising very close control over priorities some diminution is now practicable.

2. H.M.G. have accordingly decided (i) that arrangements shall be made for shipment of additional 200,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India during third quarter of 1944, tonnage set aside for military maintenance purposes being reduced accordingly; (ii) that the position shall be reviewed in the first fortnight in August and again early in November with a view to such further recommendations as may then be justified.

3. I am asking M.W.T. to let me know as early as possible the dates by which it will be possible for them to work necessary shipping into position and will inform you in due course.[5]

[5] Mr Amery provided Lord Wavell with further information on the background to the food imports decision in his private tel. 561 Guard of 24 June. L/E/8/3323.

549

Sir G. Cunningham (North-West Frontier Province) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/221: f 72

CONFIDENTIAL *24 June 1944*

Report No. 12

4. The Committee of Action of the Muslim League are now, despite considerable opposition from Aurangzeb, in Peshawar. They are clearly disappointed as to the extent of the following of the Muslim League in this Province. They had understood from Aurangzeb that the League was predominant, and steadily growing in strength. They have been disillusioned and have realised that the Muslim League in this Province is a misnomer for party factions. They are, I think much more interested in strengthening the provincial organisation of the League than in bolstering up the present Ministry.

550

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *26 June 1944*
Received: 9 July

It was a great relief to me on Saturday when I heard that the Prime Minister had accepted the conclusion of the Chiefs of Staff and agreed that you should be informed immediately. I fully realise how much you would have preferred a clear-cut promise for the next nine months; but I do understand Winston's and the Chiefs of Staff's intense preoccupation with operational possibilities, and their reluctance to commit themselves so far ahead. Where it comes to balancing one risk against another, Winston, in his position and with his outlook, will naturally run any risk rather than one which immediately affects the great military stakes to which we are committed. All the same, the Chiefs of Staff are fully seized of the gravity of the Indian situation, from the military point of view if from no other, and will, I know, do their best to be helpful once again when we get to the beginning of August. Meanwhile, your personal telegram[1] to Winston, which stated the case with admirable force, will I hope have sunk in.

2. I see Casey has secured his prorogation[2] amid the customary unseemly scenes in the Bengal Assembly. I suppose that means that the question of Section 93 is postponed till August when Nazimuddin faces the Assembly again—unless, indeed, further defections convince him that he cannot face it and he consequently asks to be relieved of his responsibilities.

[Para. 3, on a chairman for the Bengal Administrative Enquiry; para. 4, on German flying bombs; and para. 5, on the making of a film on India, omitted.]

6. I have telegraphed[3] to tell you that I have not been able to persuade the Admiralty to agree to the resumption of the *Haj* Pilgrimage this year. I wrote twice to Alexander about this as a result of paragraph 9 of your letter of 1st May[4] and your telegram of 2nd June[5] and warmly endorsed your plea for help in the matter. Alexander's reply, which I enclose,[6] is explicit about the reasons

Banerjee is putting up something about this, I think we must continue to be importunate.

W.

[1] No. 547. [2] On 23 June. [3] 566 of 27 June. L/PO/10/18. [4] No. 490.
[5] 1149–S. L/PO/10/18.
[6] Not printed. In his reply, dated 22 June 1944, Mr Alexander said that while he appreciated the political importance of the *Haj* pilgrimages, the operational difficulties at that time were too great. He felt that if a pilgrim ship were sunk there would be a greater adverse effect on Muslim League morale than the non-resumption of the pilgrimages.

for which Admiralty feel bound to confirm the Commander-in-Chief's decision. Disappointing as the reply is, I do not feel able in all the circumstances to press the matter any further with Alexander at present, although I have asked to be told if in the next month or so circumstances alter sufficiently to enable the question to be reconsidered.

[Para. 7, acknowledging material sent for use with the Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions, omitted.]

29 June

8. I am sorry that Orissa has failed to keep a Ministry going. That, *plus* what seems almost inevitable in Bengal, rather does away with my boasting that a majority of Indian Provinces were actually governed by Indian Ministries. But it all goes to strengthen my conviction that the British system of an Executive dependent from day-to-day on Parliamentary support will not work in India and that we must look for something like the Swiss system in which a coalition ministry once appointed is independent of Parliamentary votes for the rest of its term of office. I am never quite sure whether, even under the existing Constitution, a Governor should not continue to extend his confidence to a Ministry in spite of adverse votes, if he thought it the best Ministry under the circumstances, and certify their finance for them!

9. I need not say that I entirely agree with your view[7] that there would be no point in your seeing Gandhi unless and until he definitely climbs down from his "Quit India" resolution and gives some indication of a real willingness to co-operate. Nor do I see any justification—unless indeed you are going to re-intern him—for allowing him to contact the rest of his executive. Even if he were not authorised by the previous Congress resolution to call off the campaign with which he was entrusted, he is perfectly entitled to say that personally he has changed his mind and is prepared to persuade his colleagues to do the same. For him to say that he cannot express an opinion of his own until he has been allowed to consult them is of course pure quibbling, especially as he has already expressed his opinion to Jayakar.

[7] See No. 541, para. 7 and No. 544.

551

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 351

L/E/8/3323: f 82

Shipment of Foodgrains to India

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *27 June 1944*

1. My colleagues may like to know the developments which have taken place since the War Cabinet last considered this matter on the 28th April, 1944 (W.M. (44) 59th Conclusions).[1]

2. A negative reply[2] having been received from President Roosevelt, the Prime Minister directed that the matter should again be considered in the Indian Foodgrains Committee. The Committee agreed[3] that there was no possibility of finding further shipping for imports of foodgrains to India unless this could be found out of shipping already allocated for military purposes. The matter was then referred to the Chiefs of Staff, who reported to the Prime Minister on the 22nd June[4] that they considered that the provision of wheat for India is a military requirement of great strategical importance. Apart from political considerations, the military consequences of a second disastrous famine in India would be most serious in its effect on the morale of the Indian Army and on the security of India as a base for operations in Burma and China. As no other source of tonnage was available, the Chiefs of Staff recommended that 25 sailings from military maintenance programmes over the next three months should be cancelled and that the Minister of War Transport should be asked to arrange for the shipment of an additional 200,000 tons of wheat from Australia to India during the third quarter of 1944. They also recommended that the War Office, in consultation with the other Service Departments, should review the position during the first fortnight in August and again during the first fortnight in November.

3. The Prime Minister approved action being taken in accordance with the Chiefs of Staff's recommendations, and with the concurrence of the Minister of War Transport and the War Office, I have communicated[5] the decision to the Viceroy. The Viceroy has replied[6] that although the decision is not entirely satisfactory from his point of view he will do his best. I hope, therefore, that, for the time being at any rate, this critical situation has been eased.

L. S. A.

[1] No. 485. [2] See No. 524. [3] See No. 530.
[4] A copy of the Chiefs of Staff's report (C.O.S. (44) 554(0)) is on L/E/8/3323. [5] No. 548.
[6] See No. 547, note 1.

552

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *27 June 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 13th June 1944.[1] I am reading Moon's book[2] and finding it very interesting though a bit cynical and disillusioned. I will let you know later what I think about it. It is a great pity he is lost to the Indian Civil Service. People who know him well are agreed that he was a good and practical District Officer, and he has an original mind. I gather he got into hot water several times during his career for breaches of discipline—usually because he could not refrain from baiting his seniors. Do you know what he is doing now, I imagine it might be possible to offer him some employment in India later on.

I note from paragraph 17 of your letter that Firoz is still busy constitution-making. Regional schemes of the kind he proposes are superficially attractive, but in the long run everything will depend on a communal settlement of some kind. Recent events in the Punjab and Bengal show how real the communal problem is.

2. I was very glad indeed to get your recent telegrams[3] about food. As you supposed the solution is not entirely satisfactory, because I should much prefer to see nine or twelve months ahead. But now that we are to have 400,000 tons of wheat shipped to India by the end of September, in addition to the 350,000 tons of foodgrains (wheat, barley and maize) delivered between October 1943 and April 1944 and to the 50,000 tons now coming in from shipments made in the first quarter of 1944, I think that Council will accept the position for the time being, and that the Food Department will be able to issue a satisfactory announcement which will, I hope, steady food prices and bring more grain into the markets. But the position will be critical for some time. I am not sure when your Debate takes place in Parliament—probably not for some time now—but, subject to Council's advice, I propose to telegraph to suggest that you might make an encouraging statement about His Majesty's Government's determination to help India. This would have a good effect on morale and would reinforce the Food Department's announcement here.

Although Casey has shown no official anxiety, I hear that lack of rain is damaging the *aus* crop in some parts of Bengal, and that the cultivators are beginning to be anxious about *aman* prospects.

Governors have been letting me know in their periodical letters the progress of their respective "Grow More Food" campaigns. Performance seems to vary

a good deal from one Province to another, but on the whole quite a lot has been done. I am now trying to get the "Grow More Food" business on to a more methodical footing. I am sure that all Provinces need much larger agricultural staffs, and ought to set about recruiting them and providing special war-time training courses. Jogendra Singh has just held a meeting of his Policy Committee on Agricultural Reconstruction in Simla, and I have pointed out to him that agriculture is perhaps the only subject for which post-war development is directly connected with war activities. He presented the Committee with a great mass of technical material, and I want him now to get down to a comparatively simple programme with the Provincial Governments. This programme should include the reorganisation of the Agricultural Departments, the execution of small irrigation schemes, improvements in the supply and distribution of good seeds, the supply and distribution of such manures as are available, and the simpler measures against crop pests and diseases. Provincial Governments are of course already working on these lines, but I doubt if they are using their Revenue Staffs to the full, and it is quite certain that the technical staff is far short of requirements.

3. The Gandhi correspondence has been given considerable prominence in the Press for some days. Gandhi's own collection, which was circulated privately to his friends (including most newspaper editors of any importance) seems to have included pretty well everything except the reply[4] to his long letter[5] about Congress responsibility. Our own collection omitted the letters dealing with trivialities, and is, I think, a fair collection of those of any real political interest. Our belief that it was best to let the public have the correspondence all at once seems to have been justified. The more enthusiastic Hindu papers are publishing it in serial form, but most of their readers will probably get tired of it before very long, and if they are really keen can have our collection for Re. 1. Editorial comment has, on the whole, been less violent than one might have expected, though there is the usual tendency to omit the Government side of the case.

4. Gandhi, who is still at Poona, intends to go to Panchgani for some little time—possibly three weeks or more. He has shown no sign yet of active intervention in politics, and it seems that he is still easily tired by interviews. His blood pressure is reported to be still very erratic. I sent you by the last bag a copy of his recent letter[6] to me and of my reply.[7]

5. I note from paragraph 7 of your letter that you are taking up with the Treasury and the Civil Service Commission the question of future recruitment to the Indian Civil Service and the Indian Police. I agree that not very much

[1] No. 537. [2] See No. 537, note 1. [3] See No. 548 and its note 5.
[4] See No. 188, note 2. [5] See No. 51, note 1. [6] No. 539. [7] No. 544.

may come of this, but I am certainly in favour of a far greater interchange between Whitehall and India. This fits in with your idea that control from Whitehall should be relaxed. As long as the India Office exists it is important that it should be qualified, by constant personal contacts, to speak for India, but eventually I suppose that there will be no India Office, and that India will have a High Commissioner, like the Dominions, whose office will be staffed by men with a recent knowledge of Indian conditions. I am told that the Colonial Office are already registering applicants for employment after the war, so that we have no time to lose in deciding what we are going to do.

I have telegraphed personally to Halifax about Bajpai as he was so keen when I met him in London last year on the proposal to raise the Agent-General's status, that, unless he has changed his mind, he should be able to give us a good deal of help.

[Para. 6, on Mr Amery's conversation with Col. J. A. Appleton; para. 7, on the proposal for an Indian Navy League; and para. 8, on Lt.-Gen. Sir T. Hutton's future prospects, omitted.]

9. The fighting in France seems to be going well. Hallett and Colville, in recent letters, have both suggested that too little is said about the British Army in messages from Italy and France. The exploits of the Americans, the Canadians, and the New Zealanders, and sometimes of the Indians, are well dealt with, and the R.A.F. get their share of the credit, but comparatively little is said about the Navy and the British Regiments. This is of course an old complaint, but I thought you might like to know how home publicity has struck Hallett and Colville.

10. We must soon begin to think about Raisman's successor as Finance Member when his extension ends next April. For reasons which you know it would be difficult to appoint Mudaliar, and it has occurred to me that Deshmukh, head of the Reserve Bank, if asked to serve on patriotic grounds might consent to do so. I have not gone into the technical aspects of this; Deshmukh would, of course, be making a considerable financial sacrifice, and he would have to be replaced in the Reserve Bank by someone who would make way for him again in due course. I should be glad to know what you think. Raisman I know believes that when Taylor, Deshmukh's predecessor, died, he might himself have been appointed to the Bank, with Deshmukh as Finance Member. He did not think of this at the time, and the possibility did not occur to anybody else. I think this might have been quite a good solution, as it would be a great advantage to the first Indian Finance Member to have someone of real authority as head of the Reserve Bank. I do not suggest that Raisman should necessarily go to the Bank next April, but as I have said above it is essential that whoever does go should make way for Deshmukh when he ceases to be a Member of Council.

11. I have sent you another telegram[8] about the *Haj* Pilgrimage. Somerville said he could not find the escort vessels required to make the pilgrimage safe. It would be a great pity not to allow the pilgrimage on a limited scale this year, and I hope you may have been able to do something with the Admiralty. There will be much unfavourable comment if with all our naval superiority we cannot find the necessary escorts.

12. There has been a good deal of political activity in the Provinces during the week. In Bengal, as you know, Casey decided to prorogue his Assembly after the sitting of 23rd June. He is not inclined to allow a long recess, and thinks the Assembly should meet again in August. Nazimuddin wants a break until October, and Casey has decided to come up here and discuss the situation with me. He has been hotly attacked by Fazlul Huq and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on the ground that he has intervened to save a failing Ministry. On the other hand I have seen a surprising report that Fazlul Huq is negotiating with Nazimuddin for the Speakership. Fazlul Huq has no principles, and the report may be true, though it is more likely that there is nothing in it. Possibly Nazimuddin may be acting on the same line of ideas as an Egyptian Prime Minister once expressed when asked why he had taken a notorious crook into his Ministry; he said: *C'est un homme absolument sans principes, il nous sera très utile.*

Parlakimedi seems to have played his cards very badly in Orissa. He handed his resignation to Lewis without squaring his party and, apparently, without taking his colleagues into his confidence. He told Lewis that he thought he could form an alternative government, but Lewis is quite satisfied that he cannot do so. On 27th June I concurred in the proposal that after Lewis next sees Parlakimedi on 29th June he should go into Section 93 from the following day. You have been informed of this by telegram.[9] It is quite possible that the Section 93 period will not be long—there is nothing stable in Orissa politics, and someone, probably not Parlakimedi, may, within a few weeks, be able to form a government.

The Punjab remains quiet, and the Home Department here are writing to the Muslim League[10] pointing out that we will not tolerate private armies, and asking that any instructions to the Muslim League National Guards which infringe our declared policy may be withdrawn. They are also writing to Provincial Governments[11] suggesting wider restrictions in respect of uniforms and camps. I have heard no more about the incursion of Maulvis from the United Provinces, and shall not have an opportunity of talking to Glancy until the middle of July.

A recent Students' meeting at Rawalpindi held under Muslim League arrangements was attended by two Ministers from the North-West Frontier

[8] 1312–S of 29 June. L/PO/10/18. [9] L/P&J/8/658.
[10] A copy of this letter, dated 24 June 1944, to Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan is on L/P&J/8/679.
[11] A copy of this circular letter, dated 26 June 1944, is *ibid.*

Province, and one from Sind, who attacked the Punjab Government for their conduct in the dispute with Jinnah. The Sind Minister demanded the dismissal both of Khizar and the Governor. I have written to Cunningham and Dow pointing out that although Ministers are entitled to speak as and where they please, it is not wise in present conditions for them to attack neighbouring provincial governments, especially when visiting the Provinces concerned. Provinces are so dependent on one another for the supply of foodgrains that no sensible minister would pick a personal quarrel with his neighbours. I hope Cunningham and Dow may be able to stop unnecessary speaking during the war.

13. Khare has recommended Sir Gopalaswami Ayyangar to succeed Shafa'at Ahmad Khan in South Africa in November. Ayyangar is 62, and after long service in Madras, where he was a member of the Provincial Civil Service and rose to the Board of Revenue, he was Prime Minister in Kashmir from 1937 to 1943. He is at present a member of the Council of State and took an active part in the last session. I have heard him well spoken of, but do not know him, and have asked the Political Department to advise, as they must have seen a good deal of his work in Kashmir. Glancy has a good opinion of him.

[The last sub-para. of para. 13, on an Advisership to the Secretary of State for Torick Ameer Ali; para. 14, on whether the title "The Hon'ble" should be attached to India's representatives abroad; para. 15, on an interim report of the Commonwealth Communications Council; and para. 16, on leave for European staffs of Burmese firms now employed with the fighting services, omitted.]

17. My son is getting on well, and will go to Simla with my wife within a few days. Mountbatten and Pownall with some of the S.E.A.C. staff are arriving today. I expect to be here until about the 12th July, when I hope to go to Simla for a fortnight or so. I have a small investiture here on 6th July, and a reception, mainly for Americans, on 10th.

553

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *29 June 1944, 3.30 pm*
SECRET *Received: 29 June, 3.15 pm*

No. 1318–S. Guard. My telegram No. 1292–S[1] dated June 25th. Food imports. Council considered this morning[2] and expressed the view that additional

shipments would most certainly be needed in last quarter, 1944, and first quarter, 1945. They noted that His Majesty's Government would review the position in August and again in November.

2. Council approved immediate announcement which is essential in view of unsatisfactory procurement position in Punjab.

3. They also recommended that during next Indian debate you should if possible make encouraging statement to the effect that His Majesty's Government are keeping a close watch on Indian food situation and will continue to do everything possible to help.

[1] See No. 547, note 1.

[2] A memorandum circulated by Lord Wavell to the Executive Council on 28 June summarising his efforts to obtain imports of foodgrains and recommending acceptance of H.M.G.'s decision as conveyed in No. 548 is in Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 245–6.

554

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 78

PRIVATE *29 June 1944*

SECRET

1319–S. Although our anxieties about food imports are very far from ended I am glad to have the assurance of enough imports to make a definite announcement and am grateful to you for your help.

555

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 40

PRIVATE *29 June 1944*

SECRET

1321–S. My telegram 1320–S[1] of June 29th. Bengal situation. Casey gave me impression in discussion that he personally is anxious to move into Section 93. He is shocked at administrative weakness of Bengal and futility and corruption

[1] In this tel. Lord Wavell reported discussions he had had with Mr Casey on 28 and 29 June in which Mr Casey had outlined the events leading up to the Bengal ministerial crisis (cf. Nos. 541, para. 3 and 552, para. 12) and had expressed his views on whether the Bengal Legislative Assembly should remain prorogued until August or November 1944. A copy of Mr Casey's notes for his discussion with Lord Wavell on 28 June and a note of their conversation recorded by P.S.V. are in Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 238–44.

of provincial politics. He says that members are being bought at Rs. 5000 to Rs. 10000 a time, and that the faint-hearted were kept in confinement by their party leaders during the last session. The opposition recently offered Suhrawardy the Chief Ministership and are hawking government appointments round Calcutta in hope of further disintegrating Nazimuddin's government. Departmental business is at a standstill and likely to remain so. Casey's view is that nothing but a period of efficient administration unimpeded by politics will do any good and he said that section 93 would be like a breath of fresh air in hot weather.

2. We were both amused at complexity [? reversal] of our respective positions since January when I unsuccessfully advocated section 93 to H.M.G.[2] and warned Casey of state of Bengal politics which he hardly credited at the time. I have restrained Casey from immediate announcement of session in August because I think he must give Nazimuddin a fair run. But I agree with him that he cannot allow time up to October or November if Nazimuddin continues to lose ground and administration is neglected.

3. Casey seemed in good health and good heart and full of reforming zeal.

[2] See Nos. 301 and 311.

556

Government of India, Food Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 76

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *29 June 1944, 8.25 pm*
Received: 29 June, 6.15 pm

8587. Your telegram to Viceroy No. 14201[1] dated June 24th. Wheat imports. Matter was discussed in Council today. We intend to issue following statement in the morning papers of Saturday July 1st unless we hear from you to the contrary.

Begins: His Majesty's Government who are in close touch with food situation in India have informed Government of India that arrangements will be made to ship 400,000 repeat 400,000 tons of wheat to Indian ports before end of September 1944. This quantity is in addition to 400,000 tons of food grain imports mostly wheat arranged since October 1943 shipments of which continue and have almost been completed. Food grain imports into India during the 12 months October 1943 to September 1944 will therefore amount to 800,000 repeat 800,000 tons. His Majesty's Government will review position early in August 1944 and again early in November 1944 and will then consider what further assistance India requires and what can be arranged. *Ends.*

[1] No. 548.

557

Sir J. Thorne to Sir D. Monteath

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 56

IMPORTANT
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *29 June 1944, 11.50 pm*
Received: 30 June, 2.15 am

8589. Monteath from Thorne. Your telegram 14084[1] dated June 23rd. Following may be substituted for our number 8181 of June 20th. *Begins*. Though there is no indication at present that it will be necessary to re-arrest Gandhi we must settle where to send him if necessity arises. Aga Khan's palace no longer available. Ahmednagar Fort is healthy and most suitable place for him as for Members of Working Committee since segregation from other prisoners and outside world can there be ensured. At Ahmednagar he would have the company of members of Working Committee but we see no disadvantage in that in the circumstances likely to be (corrupt group)[2] if his arrest becomes necessary. *Ends*.

[1] The proposal in this document had been put forward initially in Home Dept. tel. 8181 of 20 June which was accompanied by tel. 1260–S of the same date in which Lord Wavell drew Mr Amery's attention to the proposal. However, in tel. 14084 of 23 June Sir D. Monteath asked Sir J. Thorne to resubmit it in a form suitable for circulation to the Cabinet. L/P&J/8/623.

[2] Appendix to No. 563 has 'present' here.

558

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 67

PRIVATE

INDIA OFFICE, *29 June 1944*

573. Your 1282–S.[1] Before I raise this with Anderson I should be glad to know whether you have considered how this fits in with the suggested All-India Enquiry on long-term reorganisation of Services to suit post-war conditions, for which Rowland is to prepare material. Will not enquiry into administrative reform in Bengal inevitably include the question of the Services required?

2. I should like to know if you do not feel that there is a strong case for early appointment of a strong Committee or Commission of say three or four to cover the whole field including Bengal to which they could be asked to devote early attention and perhaps make interim report on immediate questions. This would have the advantage of avoiding anomaly otherwise apparent of having

[1] No. 545.

a high powered individual enquiry in Bengal when it is known that all India investigation is impending.

3. I should hope to be able to secure an experienced retired officer of Home Civil Service who has held high rank, but while he would have great administrative experience here he would have no knowledge of Indian conditions. I cannot help feeling that we should get better results if an experienced I.C.S. officer and someone with administrative experience in business or in Colonies were added and the enquiry were made a general one. It might then be desirable to secure someone with broad political experience as Chairman.

4. I appreciate urgency of Casey's problem but see no reason why an interim report on Bengal should not meet this.

559

Sir M. Hallett (United Provinces) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/273: f 88

SECRET *29 June 1944*

No. U.P. 235

2. I am interested to hear of Gandhi's latest move.[1] He did exactly the same thing in 1933 after his release and Lord Willingdon refused an interview as long as the Civil Disobedience movement continued. No doubt you have seen the history of the Civil Disobedience movement of 1930–34 which the home department prepared,[2] which deals with his activities at that time. History seems to be repeating itself and I hope Your Excellency will refuse to see Gandhi; it will merely increase his prestige and lead him to put forward more impossible demands. You have made your position abundantly clear and it is for Gandhi to offer co-operation, not to enter into negotiations. As Sir Philip Chetwode always used to say, he is "as cunning as a cartload of monkeys" and he certainly has the Bania mentality and love of bargaining. One of my Indian friends, a Muslim, commenting on the correspondence told me that he had met some young Indian military officers who felt very bitter over his libel of the Army whom he called mercenaries.[3] I have also seen letters to this effect in the papers. This, I hope, means that there is a growing volume of opposition to Gandhi, but with the Indian press supporting him, the growth of opposition is slow.

[1] See No. 539.

[2] A copy of *The Civil Disobedience Movement 1930–34. A Note on the General Measures taken to deal with the Movement*, printed in 1936, is on L/P&J/7/1094.

[3] See No. 417.

560

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 67

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *30 June 1944, 12 noon*

14557. Food Department telegram 8587[1] of 29th June. Food Imports. I have some comments and will telegraph them with all possible speed but I must consult colleagues and may not be able to reply in time for announcement Saturday. If not please postpone announcement pending receipt.

[1] No. 556.

561

Mr Amery to Mr Churchill

L/E/8/3323: ff 63–4

TOP SECRET *30 June 1944*

Secretary of State's Minute: Serial No. P. 23/44

Prime Minister

Please see the enclosed telegrams[1] from the Viceroy dealing with the announcement which the Government of India propose to make immediately about His Majesty's Government's help over food grains. The announcement is essential if the position is to be held and panic averted, and it skilfully makes the most of the total help afforded by His Majesty's Government by adding the additional help now to be given to the shipments already made since October last or fixed up for the third quarter of 1944.

It has, however, occurred to me that if this announcement reaches the President without some explanation he may say that you cried wolf unnecessarily to him, and you may wish to send him a personal telegram explaining that the additional 200,000 tons has only been found by a drastic cutting down of our military maintenance provision over the whole field of the war. I enclose a draft[2] for consideration.

You may, however, think it enough to tell Halifax to explain the situation on the departmental level, or to provide him with the text of this message to use if the matter is raised.[3]

[1] Nos. 553 and 556. [2] Not printed.

[3] Mr Churchill minuted on Mr Amery's suggestion:

'FOREIGN SECRETARY

I do not propose to send a personal telegram on this. Will you be so kind as to explain the matter to the State Department, quoting my personal to the President [i.e. the tel. in No. 486] as the key?' R/30/1/4: f 28.

I propose to approve[4] the text of the announcement in telegram 8587 subject to the omission of the words "and will then consider what further assistance India requires and what can be arranged" at the end of the draft.

I have sent a copy of this Minute to Leathers.[5]

L. S. AMERY

[4] Mr Amery's approval was sent in tel. 14583 of 30 June to the G. of I., Food Dept. He also asked for the substitution of the words 'shipments to India' for 'imports into India' in the penultimate sentence of the statement. L/E/8/3323: f 61.

[5] A copy of the covering minute to Lord Leathers is *ibid.*: f 62.

562

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 69

PRIVATE *2 July 1944*

1330–S. Your private telegram No. 573,[1] of 29th June. Committee on Bengal Administration. I certainly consider possible overlap between enquiry by Rowland and enquiry proposed by Casey. Casey's enquiry will obviously include question of services required and its results should be most useful to Rowland.

2. There is no repeat no case at present for appointment of a strong commission to cover entire field including Bengal. With constitutional future so uncertain, an expensive commission would waste most of its time. General enquiry by Rowland is a stopgap arrangement and is best we can do to ensure that Central and Provincial Governments provide for their needs in immediate post-war period. Bengal case is special. During discussion on Bengal situation on 28th and 29th June[2] Casey expressed grave anxiety about state of administration and stressed urgency of getting Committee to work. He thinks it most important to get first class chairman as soon as possible. Names mentioned in discussion were Hailey, Kinahan Cornwallis, Francis Floud, and Dudley. He proposes to include serving Indian Civil Service officers from Punjab or Madras and from Bengal as members.

3. I agree with Casey and shall be grateful for earliest possible suggestions.

[1] No. 558. [2] See No. 555, note 1.

563

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 371

L/P&J/8/623: f 53

India

Gandhi: Place of Detention if Re-arrested

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *3 July 1944*[1]

In my memorandum of the 5th May (W.P. (44) 241)[2] I said that in view of Gandhi's release there was no need for further consideration of my proposal of the 2nd May (W.P. (44) 236)[3] that he should be transferred from the Aga Khan's Palace at Poona to Ahmednagar Fort, where the members of the Congress Working Committee are detained. The Government of India, however, in a telegram of the 29th June which I circulate herewith, have expressed their wish to have plans ready in the event of it becoming necessary to arrest Gandhi again—though they do not regard this as an imminent possibility—and propose that if need were to arise he should be interned in company with members of the Congress Working Committee in Ahmednagar. They refer to the climatic suitability of Ahmednagar and mention the superior facilities it affords as a place of internment for ensuring complete segregation from the public.

In commending the proposal to the favourable consideration of the War Cabinet I need only add to what I said in my memorandum of the 2nd May that Gandhi's detention in Ahmednagar along with the Congress leaders would be less likely to attract embarrassing speculations if effected after his rearrest than it might have done had he been transferred thither from Poona before his release.

L. S. A.

Appendix to No. 563

CYPHER TELEGRAM FROM GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, HOME DEPARTMENT, TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA, DATED NEW DELHI, 29TH JUNE, 1944

[*There follows the text of the proposal in No. 557*]

[1] Date obtained from the Cabinet Office. [2] No. 501. [3] No. 492.

564

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 372

L/P&J/8/652: f 35

India

Ministerial Government in Bengal and Orissa

memorandum by the secretary of state for india

INDIA OFFICE, *4 July 1944*[1]

I circulate for the information of my colleagues the following note on the vicissitudes of Provincial Autonomy in two of the Indian Provinces that differ greatly in size and importance.

Bengal.—Bengal, under coalition Ministries, has managed to retain ministerial government continuously since 1937 except for an interval of a few weeks in the spring of 1943 during which Section 93 came into force. The machine has, however, run anything but smoothly; and narrowly escaped breaking down or being scrapped for inefficiency under the stress of last winter's famine. The present coalition Ministry, which has held office since April of last year, includes caste Hindus and members of the Scheduled Castes, but the majority of the members, including the Chief Minister Sir Khwaja Nazimuddin, are Moslems and adherents of the Moslem League. Mr Casey believes that if the present Ministry should collapse no alternative Ministry would in present circumstances be possible, there being no other leader commanding sufficient stable support in the Legislature on whom he could rely for genuine co-operation in furthering the war effort. He is reluctant to have to take over the Administration without giving the present Ministry a fair trial; but its position in the Legislature is becoming increasingly shaky. Opposition reached its highest pitch recently over the Ministry's Secondary Education Bill, which was attacked as a measure inspired by communal motives by the caste Hindus who have hitherto enjoyed much of a monopoly in the field of education. Disorderly scenes took place which the Speaker (a Moslem owing his appointment to a former Ministry now largely in opposition) was unable or unwilling to control. In the absence of other Government business of consequence the Governor prorogued the Assembly on the 23rd June. It is not felt possible to face the upheaval of a general election, particularly in a Province so near the scene of hostilities as Bengal.

The situation has been discussed between the Governor and the Viceroy and is fully reviewed in the two telegrams[2] which I append. The upshot of these is that, while the period of prorogation gives the Ministry a breathing space, it cannot be unduly prolonged. If the Ministry appears to continue to lose ground or to let the Administration run down, Mr Casey will feel obliged to force the issue—as explained in some detail in the latter part of paragraph 3 of the

Viceroy's telegram No. 1320–S—by summoning the Assembly for a date early in August. He considers, and the Viceroy agrees, that if the Ministry then falls he would be fully justified in taking over the Administration under Section 93.

The Governor and the Viceroy have handled the situation with great tolerance and patience and have conscientiously observed the constitutional proprieties in spite of their acute sense of the gravely inadequate standards of efficiency in the Administration. I propose to inform the Viceroy of my general approval of the policy recommended by him and the Governor.

Orissa.—This minor and recently created Province was under a Congress Ministry from 1937 until the general resignation of the Congress Ministries in the autumn of 1939, when the Governor, in the absence of an alternative Ministry, was obliged to take over. Two years later it was found possible to form an alternative Ministry under the Maharaja of Parlakimedi, a prominent land-holder in the Province, who headed a group of 22 members corresponding to the former opposition and formed a coalition with Godavaris Misra, a Congress supporter, the latter heading a small group of 10 members consisting mainly of individuals in the Assembly who shortly before had broken away from their allegiance to Congress. The remaining 28 members of a house of 60 formed the Congress following, some of them being interned. The coalition had an uneasy history and a definite split between the leaders has now broken it up. The causes of the split are personal and local and do not reflect all-India politics. Neither leader can carry on or form a new Ministry by himself, the Congress party still refuse co-operation, and in the absence of a leader able to form an alternative Ministry the Governor has been obliged to issue a Proclamation under Section 93 and once again take over the Administration. The Province being small, and the causes of the breakdown being local, no important reactions on the Indian political scene are expected.

L. S. A.

[1] Date obtained from the Cabinet Office.

[2] 1320–S of 29 June (see No. 555, note 1) and 1322–S of 29 June which repeated a tel. from Mr Casey reporting a conversation with Sir Nazimuddin.

565

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *4 July 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 21st June.[1] In my last letter[2] I promised some further comments on Moon's book.[3] Jenkins who served with him in the

[1] No. 542. [2] No. 552. [3] See No. 537, note 1.

Punjab and knows him well, thinks that many of his ideas are sound but that he is not always fair. For example, it is true that our legal system is not well suited to India, but it is not true, as Moon suggests in Chapter III of the book, that large numbers of innocent persons are convicted or hanged, and that officials who know that they are innocent are unable to do anything about it. On the contrary, the known defects of the system have made the courts so cautious that many brutal crimes go unpunished for fear that the innocent may be involved with the guilty. I have to deal with petitions for mercy from a very large number of convicted murderers, and by the time a case has got through a High Court there is usually very little doubt about the petitioner's guilt—and a good many very guilty ones have been given the benefit of a very dubious doubt and been acquitted or have had their sentence reduced. Moon seems to think that we could revert to some simpler form of legal administration; but once a community has passed beyond the more primitive tribal stage, it would, I think, be difficult to get back to simpler methods. Something might be done by increasing the number of Judges and Magistrates, and improving the quality of the Magistrates very considerably. I am appalled at the slowness of justice in this country more than by its quality. If experienced Magistrates could take charge of all police investigations and if many more of the criminal cases could be disposed of summarily by competent people, the quality of evidence would improve and the advantages of putting an enemy into court merely to annoy him would decrease. Spens is sending you by this bag a long memorandum[4] on the judicial administration of which I have a copy. It will have to be examined in the departments here, and it would help if in replying to him you would suggest that it would save a good deal of time and trouble if he worked with the Government of India rather than with the India Office direct. One of his points is the need for improving the quality of the Judges and Magistrates.

I doubt if Moon is entirely fair in holding that for the past twenty years or so we have obstructed progress. Actually I believe that most of our efforts to modernise the administration date from about 1900. There had been a great deal of development—roads, railways and canals—before then, but the Co-operative and Agricultural Departments, and the social services responsible for education, public health and medical relief have largely been developed since. Our administrators must have suffered by their remoteness from progressive thought, but the main obstacle to progress was lack of money. It is doubtful whether the ordinary district is adequately staffed, and I am not sure that this problem was ever faced. Provincial Governments might have made the District Officer the local head of all departments working in his district and have relieved him of much of his ordinary routine work. Alternatively they might have left him to collect the revenue, maintain law and order and look after the local authorities, and provided departmental staffs of much higher quality.

No clear decision between these alternatives seems to have been taken, and the District Officer was left with a general responsibility for a well-being of the people in his district but without direct control over the departmental staffs. Co-operation, agriculture, public health and medical relief are administered under remote control from the headquarters of the Division or Province, and the extent to which the District Officer interests himself in these subjects is largely a matter of taste. The departmental people employed in a district are seldom of high quality, and some of them are subordinates. The failure of which Moon complains was thus perhaps due not to obstruction but to lack of the finance required to put things on a proper footing. It is easy to talk about large-scale development and the possibility of employing Russian methods, but I doubt if Moon appreciated the unwillingness of popular governments in India to increase taxation or to compel people to submit to control over their property and to demands for their personal services.

The book paints a rather dreary picture of India, and its conclusion is not very helpful. Moon holds that Parliamentary democracy is unsuited to India and should be replaced by a chain of Councils for the village, the district and the Province, with indirect election from the bottom upwards. He goes on to say that this new system could hardly be tried in British India which is full of the democratic lumber of the past, and that the best hope of giving it a trial is to introduce it in some of the Indian States. He then suggests, rather inconsistently, that we should at once set about drafting a treaty between a self-governing India and His Majesty's Government, in the hope that this will bring the Hindus and Muslims down to earth and make them realise that their relations with Great Britain and other countries will have to be on a national and not on a communal basis. It would no doubt be possible to begin to draft a treaty, but I do not think the communal leaders would be in the least interested. Having tried to stimulate communal unity in this way, Moon would attempt to get agreement between the parties on the partition issue, and, if he failed, would impose a constitution which, if it gave independence to India, he thinks would be accepted. Here again he is on very doubtful ground, and I am not sure how he fits in his idea of Village, District and Provincial Councils with his plans for the immediate future. All the party leaders have been brought up on the British parliamentary system and would have some difficulty in adjusting themselves to anything else. Moon, like most writers on the Indian problem, finds his solution far the most difficult part of the business, and I do not think he helps us very much.

2. I telegraphed[5] to you about the Council discussion on food imports. My colleagues were not entirely happy, but agreed that no further representation need be made to His Majesty's Government immediately, though

[4] L/P&J/8/463. [5] No. 553.

Srivastava still hankers after leading a deputation to 10, Downing Street; he is very sensitive to criticism and hopes, I think, that this would avert it from his person. The delay has had unfortunate consequences. The statement[6] by 27 prominent businessmen and politicians came out just before our announcement, and seems to have been taken very seriously by the *Daily Herald* at your end. The omission[7] of the last few words of our draft[8] made our announcement a good deal less encouraging than it might have been, and it has had a poor press. Editors fastened on the point that the Foodgrains Policy Committee[9] recommended the import of 1·5 million tons in the first year and 1 million tons in subsequent years, and suggested that His Majesty's Government were not co-operating. It is too early yet to say what the effect on the market will be, but in the Punjab procurement is most disappointing, and unless it improves very rapidly, we cannot hope to secure the quantities of wheat we require until well after the rains. If His Majesty's Government had accepted my advice some months ago, we should now have been in a very much stronger position. Prices would not have risen, and the wheat would have come into the market. The statement by the businessmen and politicians sums up informed opinion here, and you must expect attacks of this kind to continue. Apart from the state of procurement in the Punjab I have little news to give you about food. There is a good deal of anxiety everywhere except in the United Provinces, the Punjab and Sind, which are certain of being able to feed themselves. The monsoon so far has been much below normal, and unless it improves we shall have a very difficult time.

The Famine Enquiry Commission is now complete except for the business-man. After Purshottamdas Thakurdas had been dropped, Homi Mody was invited to serve but refused, and the Food Department are now awaiting a reply to an invitation they have sent to Chunilal Mehta. Srivastava has secured Gopalaswami of the Indian Civil Service as Secretary. He was until recently Secretary to the National Defence Council, and has since been working in the Defence Department.

3. Gandhi has gone to Panchgani. During his stay at Poona he delivered an address to a gathering of Maharashtra Congressmen, about the meaning of which there is as usual a good deal of argument. The best opinion seems to be that at the moment he does not intend to revive any general civil disobedience movement. He dealt characteristically with his letter to me of 17th June[10] and my reply.[11] I was not asked to agree to these letters being published, but he allowed the substance of them to be known, or rather as much of it as he thought profitable to himself. As there was a good deal of comment and speculation in the press, I decided a few days ago to publish both the letters. The reactions have been what one might expect, but some of the commentators do not seem to have noticed that Gandhi was not asking for an immediate

interview with the Working Committee or with me, but merely suggesting that when his doctors allowed him to travel, these interviews might be permitted. Holburn took the point in a despatch to *The Times*. The *Hindustan Times* is also very angry that we forestalled them over the publication of the full Gandhi correspondence. They were proposing to do so, with their own editing I presume, and to reap a considerable profit. So they now accuse us of wasting paper! Thorne tells me that booksellers, etc., have asked for another 50,000 copies or so.

4. I had a long discussion with Casey on 28th and 29th June about his political problems in Bengal. I telegraphed[12] fully to you after the discussion, and need not perhaps say very much more here. Casey is mainly preoccupied with the state of the administration. During the excitement of the last Assembly session his ministers did almost nothing in their departments, and he believes that they will do little or nothing during the recess. His own idea was to summon the Assembly for about the 7th August and force the issue there. If Nazimuddin could hold his own against the Opposition and the Speaker, the Ministry might be able to carry on; but if he failed, then there would be nothing for it but Section 93. Nazimuddin, not unreasonably, asked for more time, and I was inclined to think that Casey should let him have it. In the end we agreed that Casey should watch Nazimuddin's progress, and if he seems to be losing ground, summon the Assembly without undue delay. Casey is quite confident that no alternative Government can be found. He is the best judge of this, though some people think that Fazlul Huq and Shyama Prasad Mookerji might combine temporarily and make a show of having a stable majority. The European Group have given Casey to understand that they would not support any alternative Government, and in the circumstances it is unlikely that Fazlul Huq and Shyama Prasad Mookerji would succeed. I hope you will be able to give the covering approval asked for in my official telegram as we may have to move very quickly without much further discussion when Casey takes his decision.

5. I discussed various other matters with Casey. He is most anxious to get his Committee on the administration established and working as soon as possible, and I am not in favour of the suggestion[13] you made to me the other day that we might go in for an all-India Committee which would make a special

[6] This statement, issued on 30 June 1944, while recognising the immediate requirements of the Second Front in Europe, was intended to draw the attention of the British Parliament and public, and the United Nations, to the Indian food situation. Its signatories included Mr G. D. Birla, Mr Bhulabhai Desai, Dr M. R. Jayakar, Mr N. M. Joshi, Mr Jamnadas Mehta, Sir H. Mody, Mr K. M. Munshi, Sir S. Radhakrishnan, Dr B. C. Roy, Sir T. B. Sapru, Mr N. R. Sarkar, Mr Srinivasa Sastri and Sir Purshottamdas Thakurdas. L/E/8/3312.

[7] See No. 561. [8] See No. 556. [9] See No. 197, note 2. [10] No. 539.

[11] No. 544. [12] See No. 555 and its note 1. [13] See No. 558.

report on Bengal. The constitutional future is so uncertain that a full-dress enquiry for the whole of India would be a waste of time, and the informal enquiry we are making through Rowland is intended mainly to ensure that the Central and Provincial Governments consider their service needs and take such immediate action as is necessary to meet them. Rowland will as far as possible avoid questions of principle, e.g. he cannot deal with the manner in which the I.C.S. and I.P. will be recruited, and he will have to leave it to the Provincial Governments to do what they think best about their own Class I Services. But he may be able to persuade them to go in for reasonable expansions and to take a wider view than they would take if left entirely to themselves. Bengal, on the other hand, has been through a serious crisis from which it has not yet emerged completely, and I have no doubt that Casey is right in thinking that a thorough and detailed enquiry for Bengal by itself is most necessary. His ideas about the Chairman are not very clear. All things being equal I think he would like a youngish man, but he wants someone with wide experience and a considerable reputation.

6. Orissa went into Section 93 on 30th June, and apart from a few acid comments in the Congress press, very little has been said about it. A report has appeared in the newspapers that Parlakimedi and Nilakantha Das (the enemy of Godavaris Misra who persuaded Parlakimedi to part from him) intend to "appeal to the Federal Court" against the Governor's declaration. This report can hardly be correct as the matter is not one in which the Federal Court can interfere. But there are indications that Parlakimedi may try to get into office again, though Lewis thinks that he will not succeed.

7. There is no further news from the Punjab. The Ministers are seriously worried about the slowness of wheat procurement to which I have referred above. Shaukat Hayat Khan has been speaking in the eastern Punjab; but otherwise there is a lull in the controversy between the Ministry and the Muslim League.

* * *

14. I was surprised at your telegrams[14] about the Ceylon constitution. I will mention the matter in Council, but I am afraid the reactions here will be unfavourable. We were given to understand that the constitution would not be considered until after the war, and was not now a live issue. Khare and some of his colleagues will not, I think, be satisfied with the right of minorities to state their case to the Commission. What we had hoped was that the Government of India as a Government would have an opportunity to express views in any constitutional changes. Feeling between India and Ceylon is still strong and I see no hope of any immediate improvement. This makes the sudden announcement of His Majesty's Government's intentions all the more unfortunate. I am afraid my Council will consider it as showing an undue regard for the

susceptibilities of Ceylon Ministers who appear to have gained their point by a kind of political blackmail, and a complete disregard of the request[15] which the Government of India had made.

15. My son has just gone to Simla, and my wife and I follow on 14th July when we have got through our engagements here. We return to New Delhi on the 25th.

PS.—Since this letter was drafted attacks in the Press both on His Majesty's Government and the Government of India for their food policy have been intensified. I am enclosing in this bag some cuttings, and have despatched a telegram to you saying that further imports must be announced without delay.

[14] 14707 and 14708 of 2 and 3 June. In these tels. to Lord Wavell, Mr Amery explained the background to, and repeated the text of, a statement Colonel Stanley was to make in the House of Commons on 5 July announcing H.M.G.'s decision to appoint a Commission to examine certain constitutional proposals submitted by the Ceylon Ministers. The Commission was to visit Ceylon towards the end of 1944. L/P&J/8/198. For Colonel Stanley's statement see *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 401, col. 1143.

[15] In tel. 2271 of 28 February 1944, the G. of I., Indians Overseas Dept. told the S. of S. that it would be 'Grateful for assurance that opportunity to comment on reform proposals in good time will be afforded as Government of India strongly feel that questions regarding the status of Indians in Ceylon should be satisfactorily settled before new constitution is introduced.' L/P&J/8/198.

566

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 51

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *5 July 1944, 9 pm*
Received: 5 July, 10.20 pm

1352–S. Guard. My telegram No. 1318–S[1] of 29th June. Food imports. I must warn you that His Majesty's Government's decision has been too little and too late. It has had a very bad Press and has increased rather than allayed public anxiety. The statement[2] signed by 27 business men and politicians unfortunately preceded it and newspapers including *Statesman* comment that quantities announced are quite inadequate.[3] The recommendation of Food Grains Policy Committee[4] that one and a half million tons should be imported in first year and one million tons a year thereafter is freely quoted. Wheat prices are hardening, most favourable period for wheat procurement has passed, and

[1] No. 553. [2] See No. 565, note 6.

[3] Mr Turnbull minuted with reference to this sentence: 'It is of some interest that the G. of I. pass on the *Statesman's* criticism of H.M.G. but not of themselves.'

[4] See No. 197, note 2.

stocks withheld owing to lack of announcement about imports are not coming forward.

2. If His Majesty's Government wish to prevent famine in India they will most certainly have to send us imports in addition to those already announced. Announcement now of further imports might restore public confidence and avert disaster, but if His Majesty's Government continue to disregard advice from here and refuse to face facts I can see little hope of avoiding another disaster of which I have warned H.M.G. for many months now.

567

Mr Churchill to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (via India Office)

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMPORTANT *5 July 1944*

SECRET

584. Following personal and top secret from Prime Minister. Surely Mr Gandhi has made a most remarkable recovery as he is already able to take an active part in politics. How does this square with medical reports upon which his release on grounds of ill-health was agreed to by us? In one of these[1] we were told that he would not be able to take any part in politics again.

[1] Presumably No. 495.

568

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *6 July 1944*

Received: 14 July

I have just received your telegram[1] beginning with the warning that His Majesty's Government's decision on food imports has been too little and too late and that it has had a bad reception in the Press in India. I need not say that I fully realised, when we secured the decision, that it would be a disappointment to you and to your Council, but I rather wonder whether, conceding that fact, your people have made enough of it in the way of publicity emphasising the importance of the help given in view of the immense preoccupations of His Majesty's Government with operational needs. I am all the time in the House of Commons trying to put as good a face as I can on decisions which have fallen

far short of what I have struggled to secure, and I still hope that at your end you will be able to make as good a picture as you can of what has been done and is in prospect, considering that the whole problem is very largely one of psychology. Meanwhile I am circulating your telegram to the Cabinet so that there can be no misunderstanding on their part as to the seriousness of the situation.

2. I have also circulated to the Cabinet the papers about Bengal[2] and have little doubt but that they will accept the conclusion to which you and Casey have come about Section 93. All the same, I confess I feel a certain sympathy for Nazimuddin and if it were not for the critical administrative position should have been inclined to give him a bit longer rope before summoning his Assembly again.

3. As regards the question of an enquiry into Bengal administration and finding a suitable Chairman, I cannot help feeling that that overlaps to some extent, at one end with the Famine Enquiry, so far as it bears on land tenure and agricultural intelligence, and on the other hand with the wider question of the future provincial and central administrative set-up. I must have a talk with John Anderson, more particularly about the Chairmanship, and shall probably be sending you a further telegram in a few days.

4. I have not seen Halifax yet, but hope as soon as I have had a talk with him to bring up the question of Bajpai's status at the Cabinet again.

5. The question of a successor to Raisman I should like to postpone at any rate till the autumn, in the hope that the atmosphere may then be more propitious to anything you and I may put forward. Your suggestion about a swap between Deshmukh and Raisman is interesting and worth thinking over. I am only sorry that Mudaliar is not available. On the other hand, Deshmukh's qualifications correspond more nearly to those technical qualifications which the Cabinet previously insisted on.

[Para. 6, on a possible opening in India for Dr C. L. Katial; and para. 7, on Lt.-Gen. Sir T. Hutton's future prospects, omitted.]

9[?8]. Kashmir is leaving here on the 11th for his journey to Italy on his way back to India. Sinclair has very kindly placed a special R.A.F. plane at his disposal, which will carry him and his party to Italy and on to Karachi. I think his visit here has done him a great deal of good. He was in rather a suspicious frame of mind when he arrived, but has thawed a lot and I think is genuinely appreciative of the way he has been treated. He was inordinately pleased at being at a Cabinet meeting on the evening before the invasion took place when Winston told us all that the invasion would be launched that night. He has not

[1] No. 566. [2] No. 564.

contributed a great deal to our discussions, but he gives me the impression of being a shrewd observer and I think he may have learnt a good deal about the way big affairs are conducted. I have had one or two interesting talks with him myself, but we have not trenched on any contentious subjects and he has not raised any difficult questions about the States.

Hailey, of your Political Department, who acted as Secretary to Kashmir and Firoz during the Prime Ministers' Meeting, did the job admirably and I think he contributed a lot to putting Kashmir in a good frame of mind. He seems to have secured Kashmir's confidence in a remarkable way and I hope you will let Wylie know that I consider that he has done very good work here.

[PS., on Dr Katial, omitted.]

569

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru

L/P&J/8/513: f 282

D.O. No. F. 125(25)–GG/43 *6–7 July 1944*

Dear Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru,

I have now considered further your letter of the 23rd of June.[1] I understand the suggestions you put forward to be that a National government should be formed at the Centre, as was contemplated in the Cripps Offer, under the existing constitutional arrangements; and that ministerial rule should be revived in Provinces at present under section 93, by the formation of coalition governments and the re-assembly of the legislatures. Failing ministerial rule in the Provinces you would at least have Executive Councils or non-official advisers. These suggestions have of course been considered before. I have considered them again with reference to the present political situation and I am afraid that there are considerable constitutional and practical difficulties in the way.

2. To take first the question of coalition ministries in section 93 provinces. As you yourself recognise, the attitude of the majority party to such a ministry is a matter of speculation. Both for legislation and for supply the ministry would be entirely dependent on the attitude of the opposition and I am afraid that such a situation would produce a weak and unstable government.

3. I am not quite clear what your idea is as regards government by Executive Councils. Under the old Act, they were part of the constitution, but to introduce them into the 1935 constitution would require an amendment of the Act. The position of an Executive Council *vis-à-vis* a hostile legislature would not be an easy one. Both supply and legislation might have to be certified.

4. Non-official Advisers are of course an immediate possibility but they again would be in a difficult position and it seems desirable to recognise section 93 for what it is and not to attempt to dress it up as a democratic form of government.

5. I am not clear how you would set about constituting a National Government at the Centre; I agree with you that it would need the wholehearted support of the political leaders, and I am afraid that there is at present no sign of this being forthcoming.

6. Thus, while I have given much consideration to the possibility of introducing the arrangements you suggest, I am afraid that I do not at present see my way to overcome the constitutional and practical difficulties involved.

7. I am grateful to you for writing to me as you have done and I also should like to see Ministerial government re-established in the Provinces where it has broken down.

I have written to you frankly but not for publication, directly or indirectly.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[1] No. 546.

570

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMPORTANT *8 July 1944*

SECRET

No. 1366–S. Following personal and top secret from Viceroy to Prime Minister. Your telegram No. 584[1] of 5th July. Medical report on which Gandhi's release was ordered was that of Surgeon General, Bombay, and was to the effect that Gandhi might die at any time. Similar report was given by Dr. B. C. Roy, a leading Indian physician of Calcutta, but would not have been accepted by itself owing to his known nationalist proclivities.

2. Surgeon-General's report was undoubtedly made in good faith. It was pessimistic in that Gandhi is still alive, but Gandhi might perhaps have died if left in custody. He has by no means fully recovered and is still incapable of prolonged physical or mental effort.

3. Gandhi can hardly be said to have resumed active part in politics yet. He has addressed a gathering of about 30 persons for half an hour and written one short letter[2] to me. He is of course in touch with a large number of politicians

[1] No. 567. [2] No. 539.

who visit him, and his release has caused some revival of political activity among his supporters. Publication of Gandhi correspondence which was necessitated by release has caused some stir but except among those not open to conviction has not enhanced his reputation as a practical politician.

4. It was inadvisable to take risk of Gandhi dying in custody. His release has not worsened situation on the whole and I am clear it was right and justified.

571

Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/P&J/8/513: f 278

19 ALBERT ROAD, ALLAHABAD, *10 July 1944*

Dear Lord Wavell,

I have today received your D.O. No. F. 125(25)–GG/43[1] dated the 6th/7th of July giving me at length your views with reference to the letter which I wrote to Your Excellency from Kashmir on the 23rd of June[2] last. It so happened that before I received your letter I had given a statement to the press dealing with most of the matters referred to by Your Excellency. I have not at all referred directly or indirectly to the correspondence between Your Excellency and myself.

The only thing that I would like to say with reference to paragraph 4 of your letter is that non-official advisers in the provinces will not meet the point of view of any section of politicians and may create a further feeling against the continuance of the administration in certain provinces under section 93. I confess it is extremely disappointing to find that Your Excellency cannot at present see your way to overcome what appear to you to be the constitutional and practical difficulties involved in accepting the suggestions I have made. Nevertheless I thank you sincerely for the very frank statement of your views.

Perhaps Your Excellency will allow me to enclose a reprint of the statement[3] which I issued to the press.

I am here for another 5 or 6 days. After that I am going on professional business to Agra and from Agra to Hyderabad Deccan for a couple of weeks.

Yours sincerely,

TEJ BAHADUR SAPRU

[1] No. 569. [2] No. 546. [3] Not printed. The statement is on L/P&J/8/513: ff 278–81.

572

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/6/111: f 2

TOP SECRET THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *10 July 1944*

My dear Leo,

I have just looked through the record of the Prime Ministers' Conference, which came out by the last bag,[1] and have read as much of it as seemed necessary. I was astonished to find that the Conference practically ignored India completely. To anyone reading the record, India must appear a country of less importance than Iraq or Persia in the eyes of the rest of the Commonwealth. Neither Australia nor South Africa seems in the least interested in India or its future, politically, economically or defensively. I am not sure whether this is deliberate avoidance of an awkward problem, or ignorance. Both perhaps: but the lack of interest in India was certainly a very remarkable feature of the discussions. The future of the Commonwealth from the defence point of view, and also perhaps economically, will depend to a great extent on what happens in India in the next 10 years or so.

I must confess to being deeply depressed that there is so little realization of the importance of India in the rest of the Commonwealth. Even if the Prime Minister dislikes India and all its works so much, one would have thought a man like Curtin would have recognised its importance to his country.[2]

Yours,

ARCHIE

[1] Under cover of a letter of 24 June 1944 from Mr Turnbull to Sir E. Jenkins. L/PO/6/111.

[2] Mr Turnbull noted on the letter: 'S/S has decided not to reply to this.'

573

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 321

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 July 1944, 9.20 pm*

SECRET

15433. Press yesterday and today have been giving prominence to Rajagopalachari's disclosure of Gandhi's alleged or assent to proposals for a settlement with Moslem League, with consequent speculations on probability of Hindu–Moslem agreement. In order to deal with enquiries here I should be grateful if you would let me have as early as possible a statement of the facts as known to

you and your comments and views on the line to be taken if I should be pressed in Parliament for a statement of the attitude of Government in the matter.

2. Is there any clear evidence that Gandhi is committed to Rajagopalachari's propositions to Jinnah? Have there in fact been any such definite propositions since those which came to nothing last year?

3. Puckle is also asking[1] for guidance for Embassy in Washington.

[1] In tel. 59 of 10 July to Mr Amery. L/P&J/8/519.

574

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *11 July 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 26th June.[1] There is not much news about the food situation. In the Punjab, Baldev Singh, the Development Minister, has made a speech saying that wheat prices are not going above the statutory maximum, and advising growers and dealers to sell. Procurement, both in the Punjab and in the U.P., is very slow. The monsoon seems to be patchy in Bombay and Madras, and there is a good deal of nervousness. Knight, who was up from Bombay for the Investiture on 6th July, seems satisfied with a promise from the Food Department to let Bombay have 80,000 tons of the imported wheat. The Bombay Government had asked for 100,000 tons, and may have a serious problem in their dry Deccan districts. In Central India there has been a good deal of rain, and conditions have been better in Bengal. It is too early yet to say how the monsoon will go in the north; we have had a certain amount of rain here. I am convinced that His Majesty's Government will have to announce further wheat shipments before the beginning of August. It is a great pity that the recent announcement was not made two months or more ago. The delay reduced its effect very seriously.

The Food Department have still to secure a businessman for the Famine Enquiry Commission. After Homi Mody had declined an invitation to serve, Chuni Lall Mehta, whose name I mentioned in my last letter[2] also declined, and an invitation was sent to Shri Ram of Delhi. He too was unwilling to serve, and the Food Department are now trying to get Kumararaja Sir Muthiah Chettiar, who is certainly a prominent businessman, but is perhaps too much involved in the grain trade to be an ideal selection. It is very difficult to get business people to undertake public work. I suppose they are all making too much money; the lack of interest does not seem to be political.

2. There have been two sensations this week concerning Gandhi. The first was caused by Drew Pearson's assertion in a New York paper that the American people did not yet know how patient Roosevelt had been with Winston. Roosevelt had written to Gandhi in 1942 and his letter had been withheld by the Government of India. He had later been rebuffed by Winston when he made suggestions about Indian affairs, and Phillips, who had seen Winston on his return to the United States, had been "insulted" during the interview. The only point in this story that concerns the Government of India is the allegation that Roosevelt wrote to Gandhi, and that the letter was withheld. The facts so far as they are known here are that Gandhi, before his arrest, sent a letter to Roosevelt by the hand of Louis Fischer. Roosevelt's reply arrived after Gandhi had been arrested, when Merrell, who was placed in charge of the Office of the President's Personal Representative here on the departure of Phillips, was absent, I think in hospital. A junior official of the American Foreign Office was in charge of the office, and received instructions from the State Department not to deliver Roosevelt's reply. The matter was not referred to the Government of India at all, but after Gandhi's release Merrell intended to send him Roosevelt's letter, though whether it has actually been delivered I do not know. I have seen a copy of it—it contained nothing more than a general expression of goodwill to the Indian People and of the hope that India would co-operate with the United Nations in the prosecution of the war. The Congress press naturally splashed Drew Pearson's comment, and gave very little prominence to denials by ourselves and the Americans that Roosevelt's letter had been withheld by the Government of India. The *Hindustan Times* remarked rather naïvely that Indian opinion was not concerned with the "technical accuracy" of what Drew Pearson had said; in other words Indian opinion did not mind whether what he said was true or not.

The second, and the more important development, was the publication a day or two ago of recent correspondence between Rajagopalachari and Jinnah. This may have been reported fairly fully in some of the newspapers at your end, but I enclose a cutting[3] from the *Statesman* which gives the full text. Rajagopalachari propounded a "formula" which, he said, Gandhi was prepared to accept, and would endeavour to put through the Congress, if Jinnah would also accept it, and endeavour to get it through the Muslim League. There are several curious features about the "formula". It does not suggest the communal composition of the provisional government—a matter of first-class importance to the League. It appears to accept the principle of Pakistan, but does so by providing for the demarcation of "contiguous districts" in the North-West and East of India in which the Muslims are in an absolute majority. If the word "districts" is used in the sense generally understood in India, the demarcation would apparently relegate 11 Punjab districts (including Amritsar), and about the same number

[1] No. 550. [2] No. 565. [3] Not printed.

of Bengal districts (including Calcutta) to Hindustan. In Assam if all the tribesmen and odds and ends are considered, Sylhet would, I believe, be the only district with an absolute Muslim majority. Comment in the *Hindustan Times*, which may be well informed, indicates that Rajagopalachari was not thinking of administrative districts, but more vaguely of areas, not necessarily co-terminous with existing Provinces. However this may be, at first reading it seems that the "formula" might leave Pakistan with Karachi as its only port, with the Punjab partitioned in an unsatisfactory way, and with a block of rural districts (including, however, the city of Dacca) in Bengal. One can hardly blame Jinnah for thinking twice before swallowing this whole. Another point is that the central arrangements to be established by "mutual agreement to safeguard defence and commerce and communications, and for other essential purposes" are extremely vague. Finally the "formula" seems to be binding only if there is an actual transfer by His Majesty's Government of full power and responsibility to an Indian Government. This would rule out any suggestion by Jinnah for a British guarantee of the integrity of Pakistan.

It is difficult to say how important the "formula" is. I believe Rajagopalachari to be sincere in desiring a settlement with the Muslims, though he may make the mental reservation that Pakistan is impossible, and that if the Muslims are told they may have it, they will in time cease to want it. How far Gandhi is really behind the "formula" is not clear. One of Jinnah's reasons for turning it down seems to have been that it did not come from Gandhi directly, but this may be only Jinnah's vanity. Assuming that Gandhi is in full agreement with Rajagopalachari, his motives are perhaps more complex. He knows that most of his Congress followers, and the whole of the Mahasabha, detest Pakistan, and that if Jinnah could be got out of the way a different opinion might prevail in the Muslim League. The Congress newspapers have opened a violent attack on Jinnah suggesting that his recent experiences in the Punjab have disturbed his mental balance, and giving prominence to an alleged revolt against him in the U.P. Muslim League reactions are less clear, for Jinnah is still on holiday in Kashmir, and it takes time for his views to reach his supporters. The League newspapers, in the Punjab at least, seem to be jubilant over the acceptance by Gandhi of the principle of Pakistan. The line taken by *Dawn*, Jinnah's newspaper in Delhi, is that Jinnah did not reject the "formula", but very naturally said that he could not accept it on his own responsibility.

We must, I think, be careful to avoid giving the impression that we do not want a communal settlement, and if there is evidence that the parties are really anxious to come to terms, and that intervention by me would help them to do so, I may have to intervene. I will, of course, keep you fully informed. At present I think that Gandhi did not expect or hope that Jinnah would accept, and that what the Hindus generally want is the humiliation of Jinnah, and his removal from all-India politics. I think Jinnah made a tactical blunder in

rejecting the "formula" so brusquely. He could have suggested alterations in it, or told Rajagopalachari that he thought it constructive and helpful, but would have to consult the Muslim League before accepting it finally. Much of his strength is, however, due to the Muslims both inside and outside the League feeling that he is the only one of them who can stand up to Gandhi, and he may think that he has taken the course most likely to impress his followers.

Gandhi's attitude has been embroidered in a long despatch from Gelder to the *News Chronicle*, of which I enclose a copy[4] in this bag. Gelder is a very tiresome correspondent who has succumbed to Gandhi's blandishments, and is likely to be a great nuisance. I hear that he is about to demand an interview with me. He has already done so once, and I refused to see him.

3. You know about my correspondence with Sapru. Turnbull has already had a copy of Sapru's letter to me of 23rd June,[5] and I am sending by this bag a copy of my reply.[6] Although I told Sapru that my letters were not for publication, leakage has already begun, and, I suppose he will gradually disclose the substance and, in course of time, the text of my letters. It is very hard to do business in a country in which even people of Sapru's standing are unable to keep correspondence confidential. Sapru is very discontented, and I am told is politically in the hands of Shiva Rao, the New Delhi correspondent of the Madras *Hindu* and the *Manchester Guardian*. I tried to make my letters to him friendly, and to show that we were not opposed to the revival of democratic institutions in Section 93 provinces.

4. There have been no political developments in Bengal. In a long letter[7] on the position of the various party groups, a copy of which will go to you, Casey repeats his view that, if Nazimuddin goes out, there will be no alternative to Section 93. I do not find his letter very convincing, for though the Opposition Groups are entirely without principle, they might easily combine and hold together for a year or 18 months for the sake of the spoils of office. Casey may be morally certain that a coalition between Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and Fazlul Huq would not produce a stable Government, but he may be in a position in which it is very difficult to say so publicly. I have not commented in any detail on his letter in replying to him, and have pointed out that we shall have to consider the position when the time comes.

[The second sub-para. of para. 4, on a chairman for the Bengal Administrative Enquiry, omitted.]

5. The Punjab is still calm and Khizar has been speaking frankly about the relations of the Unionist Party and the Muslim League. The next trial of strength will come when the Punjab Assembly meets in August.

[4] Not printed. [5] No. 546. [6] No. 569.
[7] Dated 4 July 1944. Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, pp. 253–8.

Orissa seems to have settled down under Section 93, and Lewis has appointed an Adviser and made consequential arrangements in the Secretariat on a temporary basis. He still thinks that the Section 93 régime will be short. If it goes on indefinitely he would have to consider his arrangements with Rutherford in the light of the joint cadre position.

Sind is the latest Province to show symptoms of a Ministerial crisis. At the approaching Session there is to be a No-Confidence Motion against Khuhro, a somewhat disreputable Minister who is generally supposed to have had a good deal to do with the murder of Allah Bakhsh. Dow would be glad to drop him, and so, I gather, would the Premier. In the last few days the Sind Muslim League have demanded the resignation of the Ministry as a whole. The Premier is treating this threat with contempt, and has told Dow that the Provincial League organisation has no right of interference, and will probably be overruled by Jinnah. Some reconstruction of the Ministry may be necessary, but I do not think there will be a breakdown of Parliamentary government.

6. I am writing to you separately about a further extension for Cunningham. He is so good on the Frontier that it would be a pity to let him go while he is fit and willing to carry on.

[Para. 7, on rubber tappers for Ceylon, omitted.]

8. You have, I think, been informed officially[8] that the Government of India propose to appoint a representative with the Government of Burma. Khare is most anxious that he should be a non-official of considerable standing, and he will be provided with a Secretary from the I.C.S. Khare's selection is Jamnadas Mehta for whom, though he is frequently a nuisance and is a very strong talker, I have some regard. I think he is genuine and sincere according to his lights. I doubt if he is a very suitable choice for this particular appointment at the present juncture—for while the clearing up process is going on in Burma a senior official might be better. But Khare was very keen on Jamnadas Mehta, and as he had been properly advised by his Department, and had taken a deliberate decision, I did not think it right to interfere.

9. I am very disappointed at the decision about the *Haj* Pilgrimage, and I should be grateful if you could get it reconsidered. There is no time to be lost as various arrangements must be made well in advance—including the provision of special life-saving appliances for the pilgrim ships. I am quite sure that the effect on Muslim morale is well worth the detachment of the necessary escort ships for a comparatively short period. If we are unable to allow the Pilgrimage this year even on a limited scale, it will be believed not only among Muslims, but generally that the official news about the war at sea is not giving all facts, and the Pilgrimage is so important to the Muslim community that its continued suspension will lead to serious resentment. After all, we are winning the

war and claim to have driven the enemy almost off the seas; and no Indian will believe that we cannot spare the escort vessels for a very modified pilgrimage if we really want to. Our refusal will be interpreted as a complete disregard for Muslim interests. I should be grateful if you would telegraph me about this.

[Para. 10, on the making of a film on India, omitted.]

11. Sultan Ahmed broached with me the other day an interesting project for improving Hindu–Muslim relations. His idea was to start off with a lot of publicity on the subject, and gradually to introduce into Government propaganda an undercurrent of "goodwill" material. For example he would arrange for appreciative talks by Hindus on Muslim literature and Muslim religious festivals, and *vice versa*. He would also go in for films with a sound communal tone. He wanted me to consult Governors so that we might have the Provincial Governments behind us. I told him that before doing so he had better take the case in Council, as a drive by Government to improve communal relations is not an easy matter. I am told that after his discussion with me he had an "off record" talk with a number of press correspondents who, to his surprise, advised him unanimously to avoid drum-beating and publicity of all kinds about his intentions, and to get on with the scheme without telling anybody what he was doing. This was the advice given by his department, and I gather that he will now act accordingly. But I still think the case will have to go to Council before he gets going.

12. The financial position of Government servants, particularly married official drawing Rs. 1,200 a month, or less—is still giving Governors a good deal of anxiety. I have been urging the Finance Department to put out a policy on this question, as there is a real risk that unless they do so Provincial Governments will break away and give all sorts of concessions to officials under their own rule-making control. Apart from this we cannot expect contented work in this country from people who are genuinely hard up or in debt. The Finance Department are inclined to the view that it is useless to attempt to avoid inflation if new concessions are constantly given, and that concessions to officials will, in the long run, lead to demands for income-tax concessions by the general public. I doubt if there is very much in all this, and I hope the Finance Department will be able to produce something constructive before long.

[Para. 13, commending Sir E. Coates' work as Military Financial Adviser to the Government of India, omitted.]

14. I am sorry that I omitted in my last letter to mention your discussion with representatives of the Indian Federation of Labour, and the memorandum[9]

[8] In tel. 8931 of 7 July from G. of I., Commonwealth Relations Dept. to S. of S. L/P&J/8/211.
[9] Not printed.

they left with you. I have referred the memorandum and your comments to the Labour Department, and will let you know the result in a later letter.

15. I am off to Simla on 13th July and expect to be back on the 25th.

575

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 90th Conclusions

Those present at this meeting held in the Cabinet War Room, S.W. 1, on 12 July 1944 at 6.15 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton, the Earl of Halifax

Also present during discussion of items 4 and 5 were: Viscount Cranborne, Lord Beaverbrook, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr Hugh Dalton, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell

Minute 4

L/P&J/8/623: f 34

Gandhi: Place of Detention if Re-arrested

The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the S/S for India (W.P. (44) 371)[1] reporting that the Government of India were anxious to have plans ready in the event of its becoming necessary to re-arrest Gandhi, and that they favoured his internment, in company with the Congress Working Committee, in Ahmednagar Fort. The Aga Khan's palace was no longer available.

THE S/S FOR INDIA said that the proposal before the War Cabinet represented the considered view of the Viceroy and the Government of India, whose judgment he felt might properly be accepted on a matter such as this.

The War Cabinet—

Agreed that the Government of India's proposal should be accepted.

Minute 5

L/P&J/8/652: f 19

INDIA

Position in Bengal and Orissa

The War Cabinet had before them a memorandum by the S/S for India (W.P. (44) 372)[2] describing the present position as regards ministerial government in

Bengal and Orissa. *In Bengal* there was a possibility that the ministerial government, which Mr Casey had so far with difficulty been able to keep going, might in the near future collapse. In that event he considered, and the Viceroy agreed, that if the Ministry were to fall in the circumstances described in W.P. (44) 372, Mr Casey would be fully justified in taking over the administration under Section 93 of the Government of India Act.

THE S/S FOR INDIA felt that the War Cabinet should be aware well in advance of the possibility that it might be necessary to resort to the provisions of Section 93 in the case of Bengal, and he proposed to inform the Viceroy of his general approval of the policy recommended by him and by the Governor.

The War Cabinet—

(1) Took note of the position in Bengal and approved the course proposed by the S/S for India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA informed the War Cabinet that *in Orissa* for local reasons the Ministry had resigned and it had not been possible to form an alternative Ministry.

The Government [Governor] had accordingly been obliged to issue a Proclamation under Section 93 and once again take over the administration. No important reactions on the Indian political scene were expected.

The War Cabinet—

(2) Took note of the statement by the S/S for India.

[1] No. 563. [2] No. 564.

576

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: ff 310–12

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *12 July 1944, 11 pm*
Received: 13 July, 12.45 am

No. 1389–S. Addressed Secretary of State repeated Ambassador Washington.

Your telegram No. 15433[1] July 11th.

Rajagopalachari–Jinnah correspondence. Text follows by today's bag. Facts as known here are as follows

(1) On April 8th (i.e. before Gandhi's release) Rajagopalachari wrote to Jinnah enclosing paper headed "Basis for Terms of Settlement between the Indian National Congress and All-India Muslim League to which Mr Gandhi and Mr Jinnah agree and which they will endeavour respectively to get the

[1] No. 573.

Congress and the League to approve". Rajagopalachari stated he had discussed this basis with Gandhi in March 1943 repeat 1943 (at the time of Gandhi's fast); that it had Gandhi's full approval and that he now put it forward on Gandhi's behalf in the hope of a final settlement. There is internal evidence that letter and enclosure were delivered by Rajagopalachari and discussed personally by him with Jinnah who did not at the time agree. Enclosure set out 6 points.

First. Subject to terms regarding Constitution for Free India which were set out in remainder of document Muslim League to endorse demand for independence and co-operate with Congress in forming Provisional Government.

Second. After termination of the war Commission to demarcate "contiguous districts in North West and East India" having absolute majority. In areas thus demarcated plebiscite on adult suffrage or other practicable method to decide for or against separation. If the majority decide on separate Sovereign State effect to be given to decision but border districts to have option to join one State or the other.

Third. All parties to have the right to advocate views before plebiscite is held.

Fourth. In event of separation mutual agreements to be entered into safeguarding defence commerce communications and other essential purposes.

Fifth. Any transfer of population to be on voluntary basis only.

Sixth. These terms to be binding only in case of transfer by Britain (? of) full power and responsibility for governance of India.

(2) Rajagopalachari reminded Jinnah on April 17th by letter and on June 30th by telegram. Telegram said Gandhi still approved "formula" and that Rajagopalachari would like to publish it and Jinnah's rejection. He hoped Jinnah would reconsider.

(3) On July 2nd Jinnah telegraphed expressing surprise at statement that he had rejected "formula". He had been ready to place it before Working Committee of Moslem League in spite of fact that it was not repeat not open to modification. He was still ready to do this if Gandhi sent it to him direct.

(4) On July 4th Rajagopalachari telegraphed reaffirming Gandhi's approval and adding that if Jinnah could not support "formula" himself reference to Moslem League would be no good.

(5) Jinnah replied that he had nothing to add.

(6) On July 8th Rajagopalachari telegraphed to Jinnah that negotiations were at an end and that he was releasing correspondence.

(7) Correspondence was published in the morning newspaper's journal [*sic*].

Gandhi's approval may be assumed from repeated assertions in correspondence, from recent interview with Gelder, and from fact that he has not repudiated the "formula".

2. My comments are

(*a*) Though Jinnah might have been less brusque, "formula" could hardly have been accepted by him or the League without modification. Demarcation of "contiguous districts" having absolute Moslem majority can be interpreted as attempt to deprive Pakistan of 11 Punjab districts and 12 Bengal districts including Amritsar and Calcutta. In Assam Sylhet is the only district with absolute Moslem majority. Nature of central authority for defence commerce communications and "other essential purposes" is vague. Agreement as a whole is apparently binding only on transfer of power to Indian hands and may preclude British guarantee to Moslems. Communal proportions in transitional Government are not suggested.

(*b*) Rajagopalachari is probably sincere but believes Pakistan impossible and that if Hindus concede it Moslems will in time cease to want it. Rajagopalachari has achieved some personal success in getting Gandhi's approval of his formula. In his telegram to Jinnah of July 4th he says "Weight of his (Gandhi's) opinion would most probably secure Congress acceptance".

(*c*) Gandhi's aims are not known but he may wish to assess strength of Hindu feeling against Pakistan and at the same time decrease Jinnah's prestige by sponsoring plan which is ostensibly generous but most unlikely to be accepted as it stands.

(*d*) Hindu Mahasabha have reacted strongly against "formula" and Congress Press while reticent on merits has opened violent attack on Jinnah and is boosting left wing Moslem elements and dissidents within League.

(*e*) Some League papers are jubilant at Gandhi's acceptance of Pakistan principle. Jinnah has declined to make statement but his refusal to accept "formula" without reference to League will almost certainly be approved by his followers.

(*f*) Best view seems to be that "formula" is a try-out and that Gandhi will adapt future policy to reactions aroused. He will give away as little as he can.

3. If pressed in Parliament you might say Government of India would welcome settlement between Gandhi (? and) Jinnah which would be valuable preliminary to constitutional progress. They do not propose at present to comment on Rajagopalachari "formula" as official comment would not at this stage make matter easier for parties.

4. In my opinion the important thing is to avoid pouring cold water on negotiations or suggesting we are glad that they have been broken off. I am clear that I cannot usefully intervene at present.

5. I am repeating to Ambassador Washington for Puckle.

577

Sir E. Jenkins to Mr Turnbull

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 297

IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *13 July 1944, 7.25 pm*
SECRET *Received: 13 July, 6.45 pm*

1394–S. Turnbull from Jenkins. Viceroy's telegram No. 1389–S of 12th July. Following are latest Gandhi developments. Viceroy is travelling to Simla arriving midday today.

1. Managing Editor of *Free Press Journal* telegraphed Gandhi protesting against communication of his views on important matters to Gelder a representative of British and Anglo-Indian Press rather than to Nationalist Press and adding that Gandhi's [? proposal] to Jinnah if correctly reported "betrayed trust Congress and Nation had placed in him". Gandhi replied apologising for grant of exclusive interview to Gelder and said though Gelder's account fairly accurate it required correction which he hoped to give at early press conference. Gandhi added his views were merely (? personal) (? and) whether they promoted country's good or not was matter of opinion. He thought Rajagopalachari's formula consistent with national integrity and "spirit of Congress (? resolution)". Under non-violence national units could not forcibly be held together. Protest and Gandhi's reply appear in to-day's papers.

2. Gandhi yesterday handed Press representative for publication two statements explaining that they were two sets of (? prepared) notes prepared after discussion with an English journalist (Gelder). He said one statement was kept for publication after journalist had communicated his impressions of Gandhi to Viceroy and the other contained "notes of talks" which Gandhi gave to journalist to discuss with anyone who wished to understand Gandhi's mind.

In the first statement (presumably intended for publication after Gelder had communicated with Viceroy) Gandhi is reported as saying that if Viceroy saw him he would explain that he sought interview with a view to help and not hinder Allied war effort, but could do nothing without seeing members of Working Committee. Pressed by Gelder on how he would influence Working Committee Gandhi replied that he would have to ascertain how Working Committee would react to knowledge gained by him since his release and that the whole situation must be reviewed *de novo*. He added that whatever Viceroy might wish personally Prime Minister would be implacably opposed to any settlement.

Second statement (presumably the "notes of talks") includes whole substance of the first but adds following points:

[*There follows, with minor differences, the text of No. 590, para. 3.*]

In what seems to have been oral explanation Gandhi added that he had told Gelder he was speaking for himself and in no way involving Congress. He also referred to Hindu–Moslem formula and said that was entirely separate matter upon which he had spoken not as a Hindu but as an Indian. He did not regard himself as competent to speak for the (? Moslems).

Gelder's message to *News Chronicle* covered ground of both repeat both statements now issued by Gandhi and also Rajagopalachari's proposals. Significance of issue of two statements is not clear but intention seems to be that first only is authoritative. If so all that Gandhi has said is that he is ready to help and not hinder Allied war effort and that he must see Working Committee. Assuming that second statement is of equal authority it seems Gandhi's attitude on civil disobedience is purely personal and it is not clear what kind of National Government he contemplates in view of breakdown of negotiations with Jinnah and his treatment of Hindu–Moslem settlement as entirely separate issue. His views on defence and powers of Viceroy would be difficult to accept.

Viceroy saw newspapers before leaving this morning and told me he did not intend to take any action. If Gandhi means business he will presumably write to Viceroy. In the meantime reactions to Hindu–Moslem formula are not clear. Latest attack which has not yet appeared in Delhi newspapers is by Shyama Prasad Mukherji Bengal Maz Asabha [Mahasabha] leader who is bitterly opposed to formula.

578

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *13 July 1944*
Received: 22 July

Your long telegram[1] explaining the state of the Gandhi–Jinnah "negotiations" reached me this morning just in time to be of guidance in dealing with my questions. I don't think anything I said[2] is likely to embarrass you, or for that matter to prejudice the negotiations, if in fact any are still going on. As luck would have it, Firoz was yesterday at the Central Asian Society airing his view that immediately after the war His Majesty's Government will have to take the lead in imposing some sort of settlement and gave the impression, reproduced in this morning's papers, that he was referring to the immediately present situation. He rang me up in a state of great agitation this morning and asked me to correct it if I could in answer to Parliamentary questions, and a supplementary gave me the opportunity of doing so.

[1] No. 576. [2] See *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 401, 13 July 1944, cols. 1867–8.

2. In Cabinet yesterday[3] I got through without argument your recommendations both as to Gandhi's future place of detention, if that should prove necessary, and as to Section 93 in Bengal. I had expected some discussion on that, but I think the course of events has satisfied the Cabinet that Casey has done his best to keep ministerial government going and must be given a free hand to come to his own conclusions next month.

3. Your Indian representatives at Bretton Woods have no doubt realised that in asking the future Monetary Fund to shoulder the problem of sterling balances, they were asking too much. It may have been a good thing for them to realise that nobody supported their request. To my mind there is a great deal of unwise and panicky talk on both sides about this question. While, of course, India wants to get the capital goods she needs as quickly as possible, it is certainly not in India's interest to throw any large proportion of her sterling assets on to the world market. The only result would be to depreciate sterling and so reduce the value of India's balances as a whole, as well as of her own currency, which is based on sterling. On the other hand, it is clearly in our interest to prime the pump of our industries by letting India have all the goods she requires and, in so far as we cannot afford in any particular year to supply large exports with no corresponding imports, to draw most of our essential imports from India and from the rest of the sterling area. That would reduce the strain upon our position and at the same time also reduce the rate at which India's sterling balances are used up, which is obviously also to India's interest. In fact, it seems to me that the war has created a situation in which it is to the common interest of all holders of sterling, whether in or outside of the United Kingdom, to conserve the value of their asset by not spending too large a proportion of it outside the sterling area at the outset; but only to do so at a moderate rate during the transitional period before sterling and dollar or other outside currencies are once more freely interchangeable.

4. The one thing that matters in this connection is that confidence in sterling should be retained by all concerned. From that point of view, I greatly regret any articles or speeches here which give the impression that we are broke, or that our sterling indebtedness, so called, is something beyond our means to pay or our willingness to pay. What I should like every public man and journal here to say is that we shall of course honour every sterling balance exactly in the same way as we honour every pound note, treasury bill or war loan certificate held in this country, but that we mean to come to agreement with our partners in sterling to see that the value of our common asset is not depreciated by unwise handling. John Anderson is quite alive to that aspect of things and thanks to his careful steering, and I think also to some extent my own determined arguing, we have secured quite a reasonably satisfactory report[4] from the Cabinet Enquiry into the Indian financial position. The difficulty will be to

get the thing straight in Winston's mind, in view of the fact that he hardly ever reads Cabinet papers.

[Para. 5, on the future ownership of Indian airlines, omitted.]

6. I enclose with this a letter[5] from Firoz and a pamphlet containing his ideas on the political situation. He would very much like your opinion as to whether it would be useful publishing it at this moment. I think I have already written to you[6] about the main constructive part of the pamphlet, which is in Chapter 2, and which contains some ideas that seem to me worth ventilating. Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 are both rather loose in their facts and argument, though I don't think there is anything positively harmful in either. You will see that he would like to have your views, presumably as to the desirability of publication, by telegram.

7. I read last night with great interest your despatch[7] on the operations of the first half of 1943. You certainly had a thankless task to deal with, though one which undoubtedly brought its eventual reward in experience and training of which we have seen the still somewhat slender first fruits this year. I quite sympathise with your feeling that neither the difficulties involved nor the efforts made received sufficient appreciation at this end. No matter, the final verdict is History, which is never written in the same year as the events.

8. I enclose Low's cartoon[8] in today's *Evening Standard*. I leave it to you to judge of which of the three of us he has achieved the best likeness.

[3] No. 575. [4] A copy of this report, dated 19 July 1944, (I.F. (44) 12) is on L/F/7/687.
[5] Not traced in India Office Records. [6] See No. 537, para. 17. [7] L/PO/4/25.
[8] Between pp. 648 and 649.

579

Sir T. Rutherford (Bihar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/179: f 123

D.O. No. 568 G.B. *13 July 1944*

3. *Congress.* The general attitude of the nationalist press is still that Mr Gandhi can do no wrong, though it peeps out here and there that they are puzzled, and Sapru's recent statement[1] will not help to a saner appraisement of him. In discussing him and his motives with intelligent Indian visitors I find a curious reluctance to hear him criticised. It seems impossible to break down the

[1] See No. 571. Sir T. B. Sapru felt that: 'the publication . . . of the correspondence between Mr Rajagopalachari and Mr Jinnah shows that the Mahatma is very much alive to the necessity of communal settlement and is anxious for a fair and just settlement.' L/P&J/8/513: fl 280-1.

emotional reverence in which he is held, even with those who admit that, under his leadership, Congress from the beginning of the war have played their cards very badly.

580

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: ff 71–2

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *14 July 1944*

605. Your private telegram, 2nd July, 1330–S.[1] I fully appreciate Casey's anxiety to secure improvement of administration in Bengal and I am most anxious neither to be, nor appear to be, obstructive, but I am sure that before soundings can usefully be taken of any possible Chairman, it will be necessary that we should be clear about what we seek to secure. Casey's letter[2] to Nazimuddin gives, in paragraph 12, very precise terms of reference in relation to Bengal, but these contemplate recommendations to meet prospective conditions and it is in just this connection that it seems to me impossible to deal with Bengal in isolation.

2. In regard to Bengal in particular, it seems to me inevitable, and I know Woodhead, who was consulted before receipt of Casey's letters, shares the view, that the Famine Enquiry will comment on and probably make recommendations in regard to administration in sphere of agriculture and, consequentially, in regard to organisation of revenue side of administration. In this context, and also in connection with health services, the Famine Enquiry Committee may find it necessary to recommend, for example, the division of certain districts into smaller units or similar reallocations of responsibility, a point covered also by Casey's suggested terms of reference. It would naturally avoid such fundamental questions as division of judicial and executive, but seems almost certain to trench to some degree on various aspects of administrative reform in Bengal. There would thus be overlap between functions of Famine Enquiry Committee expressed in the proposed interim report on Bengal and the more general functions of the committee now proposed by Casey (which in any case would have to operate rather later), and you will recollect the former is acknowledged already to overlap with the Bhore Committee.[3]

3. Moreover, though I recognise that the Bengal administration has defects which it is urgent in any case to remedy, the recommendations for such remedy must surely be in line, as Casey himself suggests, with the reorganisation required in Bengal, as elsewhere, to suit post-war conditions, to meet which Rowland has been charged with a single-handed examination of requirements.

4. It seems to me that there is considerable risk of confusion resulting from recommendations by different authorities working from different angles on different aspects of what is essentially the same problem. It may be that if constitutional developments take place rapidly, all such recommendations will fall into the wastepaper basket, but in setting up any one of these enquiries with a view to improvement or adjustment of existing administrative machinery, we must surely work on assumption that it will fall to governmental authority, more or less as now constituted, to put them into effect, so as to hand over to its successor an administrative machine related to the needs of the day. It is relevant that we contemplate[4] resuming recruitment to Secretary of State's Services on long term basis with safeguards against premature discharge. And surely it would be valuable in relation to such recruitment to have authoritative investigation of reorganisation and adjustment to post-war needs required provincially and centrally against which scale and quality of recruitment to administrative services can be gauged.

5. I find it difficult, therefore, to accept the thesis, that whereas a strong committee to deal with the Bengal problem (despite the extent to which the Famine Enquiry Committee is likely incidentally to deal with it) is required, it would be a waste of time to permit it to extend its field of enquiry over the whole range. I should be grateful if you would consider further the question of correlating the various examinations, all of which I agree to be necessary in their respective ways.

6. As I see it what seems to be required is a committee which will (*a*) examine, Province by Province, the requirements of each, under heads 1, 2 and 3 of the proposed terms of reference to Rowland, enclosed in Home Department letter of 11th June, 219/44 Establishments,[5] dealing first with the case of Bengal (to whose Government, amongst others, that letter has been sent) in view of its acknowledged deficiencies in relation to present needs, taking cognizance of any views formulated in the meantime by the Famine Enquiry as to particular deficiencies in Bengal; (*b*) make recommendations as to how Provincial

[1] No. 562. [2] This correspondence has not been traced in India Office Records.
[3] See No. 521, note 13. [4] See Nos. 522, and 532, minute 1.
[5] L/S&G/File 3821 of 1944; the date should be 7 June. Heads (1), (2) and (3) of the proposed terms of reference to Mr Rowland read:

(1) examine the nature of the functions which the services will have to exercise and the controls which they will have to handle,
(2) report to what extent these functions can be exercised, and controls administered, through district officers or through separate services. In this connection he will examine the question whether the district officer should be relieved of the administration of criminal justice,
(3) report what new services will have to be set up and what should be the organisation of each service and advise in the case of each service, including existing services, whether it should be recruited on an All-India or Provincial basis.

requirements should be met, broadly as under 4 and 5[6] of Rowland's terms; (*c*) in the light of Provincial needs so ascertained and to extent that co-ordination of services to meet them is possible on all-India basis, deal with question of Central Secretariat and Central Services directly controlled by it.

7. This, of course, would be a big and protracted business and question of suitable Chairman naturally depends on your reply, but of those mentioned in paragraph 2 of your 1330–S, I am sure that in the light of his reactions to an invitation to preside over the Famine Enquiry Committee, Hailey would not accept; I am informed that Cornwallis cannot be spared from Bagdad till the end of the war; Floud, whose name had, of course, occurred to me in the light of his Bengal Land Tenure Enquiry, is 69 and not likely to accept. Dudley's name, as you know, was canvassed in relation to Herbert's vacancy; and in view of impending Madras vacancy, invitation to conduct Indian enquiry might possibly be interpreted in an embarrassingly committal sense. I have consulted Anderson as you suggested.[7] He agrees in these comments on individuals and indeed in the whole sense of this telegram. For purpose of all-India enquiry which I think best course, we would suggest for your consideration as Chairman, Sir Harry Haig with Hubert Young or MacMichael as colleague and also high-ranking retired Home Civil Servant. (MacMichael is retiring from Palestine and will be available in October. A possibility from here is Sir Thomas Phillips who will retire in autumn from Ministry of Labour and might be available. He has, in that sphere, great experience of organisation of central office with provincial branches. In both cases, fact of impending retirement should be kept strictly confidential for the present). We assume that Sir A. Rowlands could not be spared from his present duties: he has the qualifications. If Haig is not available, Young or MacMichael might service [serve] as Chairman, but member with service experience of India would then be necessary. As between the two, both have wide colonial experience but Young has some Indian background as an old Mahratta officer. Their ages are, Young 59 and MacMichael 62. You would no doubt wish to include in any case one or more Indians as members. Of course no approach has been made to any of those named pending your reply. Question would also arise how best to make use of researches conducted in meantime by Rowland. A further question is whether it would be possible to impose on Provincial Governments except with their consent any such enquiry unless constituted as Royal Commission.

[6] These read:

(4) advise as to the revision of cadres of the existing services, I.C.S., I.P., Central Services Class I, and Provincial Services Class I, and make proposals for cadres of new and progressively developing services,

(5) advise as to methods of recruitment, terms and conditions of service and the provision of training facilities on an All-India or regional basis.

[7] See No. 545.

581

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 289

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

SIMLA, *15 July 1944, 10.35 pm*
Received: 16 July, 1 am

164–S.C. Addressed to Secretary of State for India repeated to Ambassador Washington. My telegram No. 1389–S[1] of July 12th and telegrams from Jenkins to Turnbull 1394–S[2] and 1398–S[3] of 13th and 14th July. Gandhi's views and intention are still obscure.

2. Timing of published statements might appear to indicate that Gandhi wished first to immobilise Moslem League by unacceptable offer to Jinnah (who was violently attacked in Nationalist Press from July 10th onwards) before issuing main proposals to address of His Majesty's Government and Government of India. This is conjectural but is possibility.

3. Main planks of Gandhi's plan seem to be as follows—

(*a*) "National Government" (composition and method of formation undefined) to have entire control of Civil Administration at the centre;
(*b*) Provincial Ministries to be reformed in Section 93 Provinces (method not indicated);
(*c*) Governor-General's powers to be restricted to those of constitutional monarch acting on the advice of Ministers;
(*d*) Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief to have control of military operations and Allied Forces to be permitted to operate on Indian soil but not at India's expense.

[1] No. 576. [2] No. 577.

[3] In this tel., Sir E. Jenkins informed Mr Turnbull of Mr Gandhi's oral explanations published in the Indian Press on 14 July. The main points of these explanations are summarised in No. 590, para. 4 except the following noted by Sir E. Jenkins:

'(7) Gandhi considers "Quit India" resolution absolutely innocuous. The two statements show how he would implement it . . .
(9) Gandhi will never be party to sale of rights of people of states for sake of freedom of people of British India. He is prepared to suggest honourable solution to Princes.
(10) (? He has) "firmest faith" that United Nations "may win the war in trial of brutal strength", but it will only be a physical victory and will lead to another world war.'

Sir E. Jenkins also informed Mr Turnbull that Mr Gandhi had apologised further to Indian journalists for the interview with Mr Gelder. Mr Gandhi had explained that his short statement was for Mr Gelder's newspaper while the longer one was for Mr Gelder to discuss privately with anyone interested in the working of his mind. He had not intended that Mr Gelder should combine the two statements nor had he intended to give exclusive rights to any newspaper. L/P&J/8/519: f 296.

4. Gandhi puts forward plan only in personal capacity and must see Working Committee to secure Congress co-operation. He would advise Congress to accept above proposals and take part in National Government. He would apparently like to (? see) me first and assure me that his proposals would not hinder the war effort. He regards the quit India resolution[4] as innocuous and has no intention of (? withdraw)ing it. He utters somewhat vague threat that refusal by His Majesty's Government and Moslem League to accept plan might (? justify) Civil Disobedience. He says he is not reverting to Cripps offer "as this contemplated perpetual vivisection of India and would have created effective barrier against Indian independence".

5. Gandhi's short term object is probably (? negotiations) with and release of Working Committee. He would press for "National Government" of kind indicated by him and might threaten that it is civil disobedience in the event of failure. The offer to Jinnah was so vague and unsatisfactory that League will not repeat not co-operate and this was probably intended by Gandhi. Moslem feeling will be alienated by renewed pronouncement on 'vivisection' of India. He must also be aware that His Majesty's Government will not repeat not agree to "(? National) Government" outside framework of present constitution; that Governor-General and Commander-in-Chief are not responsible for military operations; and that it is impossible in war to separate civil government from defence. In short he has propounded (? plan) which is meant to appear conciliatory in the knowledge that it will not be accepted and in the hope of making His Majesty's Government appear intransigeant and put himself and Congress back in the limelight.

6. Confused presentation of plan has not enhanced Gandhi's reputation and there may be further explanations to follow.

7. I am clear that correct policy opening is to say nothing repeat nothing and to permit no contact with Working Committee. Should Gandhi make really constructive proposal direct to me I would ask for further instructions. But I would not be impressed by any plan which does not provide adequately for Moslem co-operation and recognise impossibility of radical constitutional changes during war. Our attitude should not be to criticise plan as unacceptable but to wait for responsible opinion to see for itself that plan in present form is unworkable and unacceptable to Moslems and ourselves.

[4] Vol. II, No. 470.

582

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: ff 304–6

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *15 July 1944, 12.30 am*

15722. Many thanks for your telegram of 12th July 1389–S[1] regarding Gandhi and Jinnah. With reference to your paragraphs 3 and 4 it is very probable that I shall have to deal with this and connected matters on the occasion of a debate on India which will now take place in the week after next or following week. It would therefore be most helpful to me to have your view on the nature of the replies which should be given to two specific questions which may very well be put to me: viz: (*a*) Would H.M.G. welcome or encourage the establishment of a national (or provisional) government during the war? (*b*) What would be H.M.G.'s attitude if Gandhi were to request facilities for discussion with the Congress leaders whether on the basis of the Rajagopalachari proposals or for the purpose of reconsidering the Congress position generally? If your view is that in reply to such questions I ought to make statement involving any departure from our existing position I may have to put matter to Cabinet and I should be glad of reply by Wednesday next.

2. I think the following points should be in your mind in dealing with my queries. As regards first question if there is to be any possibility of an interim government it would clearly have to be as in the Cripps Offer on the basis of the Viceroy's existing reserve powers in relation to the whole field of government and not only defence. What might also arise, if this condition were accepted and the parties agreed on proportions of representation in such a Government, is whether H.M.G. should also insist on previous acceptance of main principles of future constitutional settlement as outlined in Cripps Offer. That Offer, as you will remember from the discussions[2] before you left London, did imply that the interim Government would be based on acceptance of the main principles of the future settlement. As regards second question would there be sufficient justification for such a meeting unless (*a*) Gandhi and perhaps also (*b*) the Congress leaders first definitely accepted our conditions as to the basis of an interim government?

3. While I quite agree that you cannot usefully intervene at present I should like to have your view as to whether I should not in my speech give some clear indication that the essentials of the requirements in the Cripps Offer, as regards H.M.G.'s obligations, i.e. treaty protection for minorities, services, and other necessary matters, and also our obligations to the States will have to be satisfied

[1] No. 576. [2] See Nos. 120, 152, 159, 168, and 171.

in any constitution following a settlement between the major parties. It seems to me that, if there should be any renewal of negotiations with Jinnah, there will be much apprehension among minority elements if the feeling gets abroad that such a settlement will be accepted without such conditions, and that there is risk of this impression being fostered by skilful press propaganda if we remain silent too long.

583

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/652: f 17

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *15 July 1944, 3.20 pm*

15787. Your telegram of the 29th June, 1320–S.[1] Bengal situation. I have informed the War Cabinet[2] and agree generally with the policy recommended by you and the Governor.

[1] See No. 555, note 1. [2] No. 575, Minute 5.

584

Mr Gandhi to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell[1]

L/P&J/8/519: f 236

'DILKUSHA', PANCHGANI, *15 July 1944*

Dear Friend,

You have no doubt seen the authentic copies, now published in the Indian Press, of the statements given by me to Mr Gelder of the *News Chronicle*. As I have said to the Press they were meant primarily to be shown to you. But Mr Gelder, no doubt with the best of motives, gave the interview premature publicity. I am sorry. The publication will nevertheless be a blessing in disguise, if the interview enables you to grant at least one of my requests contained in my letter of 17th June 1944.[2]

I am,

yours etc.,

M. K. GANDHI

[1] Lord Wavell sent the text of this letter to Mr Amery in tel. 1449–S of 26 July. L/PO/10/25. It is reprinted in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, p. 327.

[2] No. 539.

585

The Nawab of Bhopal to Sir E. Jenkins

L/P&S/13/982: ff 306–7

TAJ MAHAL HOTEL, BOMBAY, *16 July 1944*

My dear Sir Evan,
I enclose the preliminary list of the main items proposed for discussion with His Excellency. I will be delighted to elucidate any of these items when I meet His Excellency later this month.

Yours sincerely,
HAMIDULLAH

Enclosure to No. 585

1. No transference of the Powers of the Crown or of the exercise thereof, in relation to the States, to a third party or any other authority, without the consent of the States concerned.

2. Industrial policy of the Government of India in relation to States' Post-war Reconstruction.

3. Joint Services (Co-operative Grouping).

4. Scheme of Attachment.

5. Protection against organised subversive movements from outside the States (such as Jathas).

6. Resolution No. 427–R[1] of 20th [29th] October, 1920, relating to the appointment of Courts of Arbitration.

[1] This Resolution (as amended by Resolution 224–P of 3 May 1926) laid down the procedure for the appointment of Courts of Arbitration in cases of disputes between the Government of India or a Local Government and an Indian State, between two or more Indian States, or where any State was dissatisfied with the ruling or advice of the Government of India. A copy of the Resolution is on L/P&S/13/982: f 297.

586

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, Wavell Papers. Political Series, April 1944–July 1945, Pt. I, pp 22–3

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

SIMLA, *18 July 1944, 2.50 pm*
Received: 18 July, 4.15 pm

No. 167–S.C. Your telegram No. 15722[1] of 14th July. Gandhi. In dealing with your question (*a*) His Majesty's Government cannot go back on principles of

[1] No. 582.

Cripps offer which have been reaffirmed several times in Parliament. On this basis Her Majesty's Government must say that they would welcome the formation of a provisional Government (that is a Government in which leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people would take office). But in the light of my telegram No. 164–S.C.[2] of 15th July I think it most inadvisable for you to attempt any detailed (repeat detailed) re-statement of His Majesty's Government's position at present. Reactions to Gandhi's plan are still far from clear. Leading Sikhs have announced that they will fight to prevent acceptance of Rajagopalachari's proposals. Council of All-India Muslim League meets on 30th July and a United Provinces member who may or may not have support is putting forward resolution recommending acceptance by League of Rajagopalachari's proposals with certain modifications and appointment of a Committee of three to discuss them further with Gandhi. I suggest you should say that until the position is clearer detailed statement by His Majesty's Government might hinder rather than promote a settlement. You will however have to make it clear that any provisional Government formed during the war would be established and would work within framework of existing constitution without modification of Governor-General's Reserve Powers in relation to entire field of Government: also that any provisional Government will have to pledge itself to wholehearted support of the war effort. I prefer term "provisional Government" to "National Government".

2. Question (*b*) will undoubtedly be your main difficulty. Gandhi's short-term objective is undoubtedly to secure interview with Working Committee and their release if possible. He can make request for interview seem very plausible to large section of opinion in India and at home. But His Majesty's Government should not permit it for reasons given in my No. 164–S.C., dated 15th July. Gandhi's plan as it stands is almost certainly unacceptable to Muslim League (especially in view of his latest statement on vivisection of India) and certainly unacceptable to us. Gandhi has apparently threatened civil disobedience if his plan is rejected, and discussion between him and Congress leaders or release of Congress leaders before we have reasonable assurance of agreement between Congress and League on plan acceptable to His Majesty's Government would be dangerous.

3. I think attitude to this question (*b*) should therefore be that preliminaries to interview between Gandhi and Congress leaders must be:—

(*a*) Evidence that there is good prospect of agreement between views Gandhi proposes to recommend to Congress and those of Muslim League.
(*b*) Definite proposal addressed to Viceroy or His Majesty's Government and not put forth vaguely to papers or correspondents (this is in accordance with my letter of 22nd June[3] to Gandhi).

(*c*) Interviews of Viceroy with Gandhi and Jinnah to be assured of possibility of Congress and League co-operating in formation of Government.
(*d*) Approval of His Majesty's Government and Executive Council.

4. I agree that statement on lines indicated in your paragraph 3 is desirable.

[2] No. 581. [3] No. 544.

587

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 278

PRIVATE *18 July 1944*
SECRET
168–S.C. Your 15722.[1]

1. I have given you such guidance as I can in my 164–S.C.[2] and my 167–S.C.[3] I am afraid you will have a difficult time over question (*b*) but I am sure that interview at present is undesirable and that we should sit tight.

2. I propose to make general statement when I meet Council next on July 26th and sound their reactions.

3. I hope you will be able to send me outline of what you propose to say in Parliament in time for comment.

4. It would be great help if Prime Minister could be induced to make a positive statement of our intention to help India to self-government as soon as possible, and if India could be reassured that her sterling balances will be honoured. Is there any hope of this?

[1] No. 582. [2] No. 581. [3] No. 586.

588

Sir J. Colville (Bombay) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/165: f 124

CONFIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE, GANESHKHIND, *18 July 1944*
Report No. 26

3. *Gandhi*. Gandhi's talks with Gelder and Rajagopalachari took first place in the news for a day or two. It is difficult to judge popular reaction, but I should say that most people who think about politics hailed his statement with relief

at first, thinking that it was the beginning of negotiations. When, however, they came to examine it closely, and when Gandhi began to qualify it with further statements, doubts became widespread. There are many cross-currents, and I think the Muslims, or at any rate those who support the League, feel that they may now score a victory in the recognition of Pakistan, but the orthodox Mahasabha people are bitterly angry that any such division should be considered.

To express a personal opinion, I feel that Gandhi has been influenced by the atmosphere which he has encountered and felt impelled to make some sort of gesture, but that he has been astute enough to hold on to one of the main points on which the Cripps' negotiations broke down, namely, immediate responsible government at the Centre. Until Congress give trustworthy proof of their support of the war effort, any such concession would be impossible.

589

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/8/3323: f 24

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *18 July 1944, 2.10 pm*

15939. Guard. Your telegram 15th July 1408–S.[1] Food imports. Your telegram 1352–S[2] of 5th July was an acknowledgment of and comment on my telegram 14201[3] which conveyed intimation of H.M.G's decision as to the best contribution they could make to ease your difficulties in the face of the difficulties confronting them. As you have been informed,[4] your telegram was circulated to the Cabinet to make them aware of your view of the inadequacy of the assistance promised, but did not appear to call for an answer. I am, however, taking steps[5] to see whether the further consideration promised in the first fortnight of August cannot be expedited.

[1] Asking for an early reply to No. 566. [2] No. 566. [3] No. 548. [4] No. 568, para. 1.

[5] In his minute P. 24/44 of 18 July, Mr Amery asked Mr Churchill to direct the Chiefs of Staff to consider the position forthwith instead of in the first fortnight of August with a view, if possible, to a decision before 1 August. At their meeting on 21 July the Chiefs of Staff invited the War Office, in consultation with the departments concerned, to review the situation regarding the shipment of food to India as a matter of urgency and to make recommendations. After discussion between the departments, however, the Chiefs of Staff proceeded according to the original timetable. L/WS/1/654 and L/E/8/3323.

590

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 396

L/P&J/8/519: ff 260–1

Gandhi's Recent Moves

MEMORANDUM BY THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA

INDIA OFFICE, *18 July 1944*

1. My colleagues would no doubt wish to have a brief review of the political pronouncements made recently by or on behalf of Gandhi. On the 29th June he made his first approach to a public appearance since his release in an address to a small group of Congress workers, in which he reaffirmed his belief in non-violence and non-violent non-co-operation, and urged Congressmen to have faith in their cause and avoid any sense of frustration over the failure of 1942. On the 8th July Rajagopalachari published details of his correspondence and discussions with Jinnah earlier this year on the heads of a proposed Congress–Moslem League Settlement, which, he stated, had been discussed with, and approved by, Gandhi in March 1943. The proposition was that Gandhi and Jinnah should agree to accept these heads and recommend them to the Congress and Moslem League respectively. Jinnah was prepared to submit these proposals to the Working Committee of the Moslem League if he received the proposals from Gandhi direct, but declined himself to accept responsibility for them. Rajagopalachari replied that it was no good Jinnah doing this unless he supported the proposals himself, and the correspondence terminated. The essence of the proposals was a conditional and partial concession of "Pakistan"—a right to "contiguous districts in N.W. and N.E. India," where the Moslem population has an absolute majority (to be demarcated after the War), to decide by plebiscite for or against separation, the offer being conditional on the transfer by Great Britain of full power and responsibility for the governance of India. The publication of these proposals had a mixed reception. The concession of Pakistan was hailed by the Moslem League Press but strongly condemned by the Hindu Mahasabha. It is improbable, however, that the Moslem League could accept the offer as it stands, as the term "contiguous districts with an absolute Moslem majority" can be interpreted as excluding from Pakistan considerable areas of the Punjab and Bengal (including Calcutta) and nearly the whole of Assam. The offer also fails to define the communal proportions in a transitional Government, and may preclude a British guarantee to the Moslems as the proposals are binding only on transfer of power to Indian hands. Gandhi's approval of the proposals seems undoubted, but his motive is obscure. Probably he regarded the formula as a test of opinion and was prepared to adjust his future policy according to the ensuing reactions.

2. There followed a series of statements by or attributed to Gandhi. The *News Chronicle* published a report of the interview with Gandhi by their correspondent, Gelder. This report was stated later by Gandhi to be fairly accurate but to contain some glaring inaccuracies and on the 12th July he issued two statements which together covered the same ground as Gelder's despatch. He described them as notes prepared after discussion with Gelder, the first purporting to be notes kept for publication after Gelder had communicated his impressions of Gandhi to the Viceroy, the second to be notes for the journalist to discuss with anyone wishing to understand Gandhi's mind. The substance of the first statement is that Gandhi would explain, if the Viceroy saw him, that he is ready to help and not hinder the war effort, but that he could do nothing without seeing the Working Committee.

3. The second statement added the following points:—

(*a*) That Gandhi would never use the weapon of civil disobedience during the war unless for a very grave reason, such as the thwarting of India's right to freedom; he has no intention of offering civil disobedience to-day;

(*b*) That he would be satisfied with a National Government with full control of the civil administration composed of persons chosen by the elected members of the Legislative Assembly; this would mean a declaration of independence qualified as in (*e*) below during the war;

(*c*) That the Viceroy would be, like the King of England, guided by responsible Ministers;

(*d*) That popular government would be automatically restored in all Provinces;

(*e*) That while under the National Government the Viceroy and Commander-in-Chief would have complete control of military operations, there would be a portfolio of Defence in the hands of the National Government, which "would be genuinely interested in the defence of the country and may render great assistance in the shaping of policies";

(*f*) That Allied Forces would be allowed to carry on operations on Indian soil: the expenses of such operations should not be borne by India; and

(*g*) That Gandhi would advise Congress to participate in the National Government if formed.

4. On the 14th July the Press published oral explanations given by Gandhi to press correspondents. Leading points are:—

(1) The statements constitute Gandhi's personal effort to end the deadlock.

(2) If his suggestions are not accepted by Jinnah or by the powers that be, he would consider it most unfortunate. If there is a hearty response there will be no occasion for civil disobedience. Jinnah is not to blame; the British are using him as a pretext to deny India freedom.

(3) The All-India Congress Committee alone can alter the 1942 Resolution; it has not lapsed, but only Gandhi's authority under it to start mass civil disobedience; if Government interferes with the activities of Congress the right of individual civil disobedience remains.
(4) His present proposals are quite different from the Cripps' offer, which contemplated "almost perpetual vivisection of India."

There will no doubt follow yet further statements by Gandhi and further efforts by his friends and his critics to clarify his policy. For the moment I need point only to the demand for the abolition of the Viceroy's reserve powers over the whole field of Government apart from military operations, to the absence of clear proposals for the composition of the "National Government," to the apparent contradiction between his latest condemnation of "vivisection" and the Rajagopalachari proposals, to the unsatisfactory nature of his suggestions for the control of defence during the war, and to the implied threat of civil disobedience if his suggestions are rejected by Jinnah or by His Majesty's Government.

I append the latest telegram which I have received from the Viceroy, in which he reviews the situation. There is to be a debate on India in the Lords in reply to a question down for the 26th July and also in the Commons next week or the week after. It will hardly be possible to follow the Viceroy's line and to say nothing at all about these moves. But it will, no doubt, not be worth while giving them an undue importance by examining them in greater detail than may be required to indicate their lack of any genuine desire to arrive at an early settlement.

L. S. A.

Appendix to No. 590

TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 15TH JULY, 1944

[*There follows the text of No. 581*]

591

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: ff 159–60

IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *19 July 1944, 7.20 pm*

PRIVATE

No. 621. Your 168–S.C.[1] I shall be winding up the debate and I understand that the more responsible members will want to talk more about reconstruction

[1] No. 587.

and the future than about Gandhi. I shall follow that lead and give most of my speech to India's war effort, the food situation and reconstruction and keep what I have to say in answer to the Sorensen tribe to a minimum. What I would say in substance is that the Cripps Offer remains in its essentials and that one of those essentials was the retention in the case of an interim government of the Viceroy's reserve powers, both as a guarantee for the effective continuance of the war effort and as a guarantee to the Moslems and other minorities that the future constitutional situation should not be prejudiced in the interval. I would add that when Gandhi had concrete suggestions to make which conformed to that essential condition he would no doubt communicate them directly to yourself. On the Gandhi–Jinnah proposals I would simply point out that though they had been before Jinnah for a year and more no agreement had apparently been arrived at and the negotiations had been declared at an end. If pressed to say under what conditions an interview with the Working Committee would be allowed I should probably say that this would be a matter for you to consider when and if concrete proposals coming within the Cripps conditions had been put forward.

Your para. 4. I am afraid there is no prospect of Prime Minister making a statement at present nor if he did would it be likely to be helpful on either point. As regards sterling balances I hope what Anderson said in House yesterday[2] and which I took steps to have reutered may be of help to you.

[2] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 402, 18 July 1944, cols. 106–7.

592

Secretary of State to Government of India, Home Department

Telegram, L/P&J/8/623: f 33

INDIA OFFICE, *19 July 1944, 7.30 pm*

16038. Your telegram of the 20th June 8181[1] (and Thorne's telegram of 29th June 8589).[2] H.M.G. concur in selection of Ahmednagar for detention of Gandhi if the occasion should arise.

[1] See No. 557, note 1. [2] No. 557.

593

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET VICEROY'S CAMP, SIMLA, *19 July 1944*

Many thanks for your letter of 6th July.[1]

There is no change in the food situation. I am glad you circulated to the Cabinet my telegram[2] asking for a further announcement about imports. I have just sent you a reminder,[3] and hope you will be able to get something done. I fully realise the difficulties, but if your colleagues had paid more attention a little earlier we should be in a much better position. I think we have made the most we can in public of what has actually been promised. Procurement of wheat in the Punjab and the United Provinces is still very slow, and we are not yet assured of a satisfactory monsoon. It has been disappointing so far. You asked some time ago[4] for an appreciation by Casey of the Bengal position, with special reference to the problem of providing rice at prices which the poorer classes can afford to pay. I passed on Casey's reply to you[5] and promised further information about his rural rationing scheme. This has now been forwarded to you.[6] The scheme is worked through a chain of food committees which deal with kerosene, salt and standard cloth, as well as with foodgrains. Supplies are made available through approved retailers, and apparently it is the intention of the Bengal Government to subsidise the supply of foodgrains if necessary. Casey seems satisfied that the system will work, but I am a little sceptical about the efficiency of the food committees, whose quality must vary a great deal. But the organisation is very much better than it was this time last year, and Casey is giving it much time and attention. Censorship intercepts show that there is still dissatisfaction with the attitude of the civil officials in some districts. The writer of a letter recently seen by my staff said that the natural order had been reversed and that the Bengal Secretariat now provided the initiative and drive and the district officials the obstruction. I think there will be local scarcities and maladjustments, but the latest news is that the price of rice has fallen both in Comilla and Chittagong, and I hope that with stocks fairly widely distributed throughout Bengal there may be no actual famine. The newspapers have been reporting a renewed influx of destitutes into Calcutta, and I have asked Casey to let me know how far these reports are true.

2. I hope I have kept you sufficiently informed of Gandhi's latest moves. Before Gandhi was released Rajagopalachari had written to Jinnah on the

[1] No. 568. [2] No. 566. [3] See No. 589, note 1.
[4] In tel. 14526 of 30 June. L/PO/10/25. [5] In tel. 1357–S of 6 July. *Ibid.*
[6] In tel. 1405–S of 14 July. *Ibid.*

Pakistan issue and got no change out of him. At the end of June Rajagopalachari, who had used Gandhi's name freely, demanded a reply, and Jinnah told him that he could not accept his "formula" on his own responsibility but would have to refer it to the Muslim League. He was quite ready to make a reference if Gandhi would deal directly with him. On the 8th July, after a further attempt at securing Jinnah's personal co-operation, Rajagopalachari broke off the correspondence and published it in the newspapers of 10th July. In the meantime, Gelder, the correspondent of the *News Chronicle*, had been seeing Gandhi, and Gandhi had given him the outlines of his plan for a political settlement. It is clear that the Pakistan issue was discussed, and Gelder's message to the *News Chronicle*, which was despatched from Panchgani on the 9th July, referred to the possibility of a communal settlement. On the 12th July the *Times of India* published what purported to be a copy of Gelder's message to the *News Chronicle*; there were in fact some differences between the two texts, and the *Times of India* version omitted an important message about the communal settlement. The appearance of Gelder's message in the *Times of India* led immediately to a protest to Gandhi by Sadanand, the editor of the *Free Press Journal*, to which Gandhi gave a soft reply. It also led to Gandhi's Press Conference of the 12th July, at which he repudiated Gelder and issued the two statements giving the authentic version of his plan. He made it clear that he regarded Pakistan as an entirely separate issue. The statements appeared in the newspapers of the 13th July, and on that date Gandhi gave a long oral explanation of them and also issued a written statement amplifying his apology to Indian journalists for having given an exclusive interview to Gelder.

The statements and the oral explanation taken together give Gandhi's own account of his intentions. They contain several ambiguities. It can, for instance, be said that he has renounced mass civil disobedience, or that he would regard mass civil disobedience as legitimate if his plan were rejected by His Majesty's Government, the Muslim League, or both. It can be said that he stands by Rajagopalachari's offer to Jinnah or that he has reverted to his old attitude on the "vivisection of India".

I am not sure that we are justified in attributing diabolical cleverness to Gandhi in everything he does. On this occasion he has had a considerable success from the publicity point of view, but his statements and oral explanation were verbose, and both his opponents and sympathisers have had great difficulty in understanding them. If he really wanted a settlement, it is not clear why he insisted on an open breach with Jinnah on the 8th July, and why Gelder was left under the impression, as he seems to have been, that the negotiations for a communal settlement were going forward. Nor is it clear why his proposals for a "National Government" were so drawn as to be manifestly unacceptable to His Majesty's Government. If Gandhi were an ordinary person I should have expected him to unfold his plan to Jinnah in the first instance. Having engineered

some degree of co-operation between the Congress and the Muslim League he would then have approached me and asked for permission to see the Working Committee—a request which it might have been difficult to refuse. Some allowance must be made for the loss of Mahadev Desai, on whom I believe Gandhi relied very much, for the state of Gandhi's health, and for his ingrained habit of leaving lines of retreat open whenever he makes a move forward. On the whole I think he must have known that his plan as it stood had little chance of acceptance either by the Muslim League or by His Majesty's Government, and that his main object was to secure an interview with, and possibly the release of, the Working Committee. He may think that his plan, apart from its effects at home and in the United States, will crystallize public opinion in India, and will make either large scale agitation or some new move possible. We must obviously be very cautious how we do business with him, if at all; and be quite clear that he really does want a reasonable settlement. I have an impression that Gandhi is still a sick man, that both he and his entourage know it, and that he wants to produce results in a hurry.

The Congress Press are hammering away at the release of the Working Committee and are giving prominence to differences of opinion within the Muslim League and the Muslim community. The closeness of Gandhi's plan to the Cripps offer, which it does not resemble in any way, is being stressed. In a minor explanation published on the 17th July, Gandhi remarked that if his plan resembled the Cripps offer so closely His Majesty's Government should have no difficulty in accepting it, and added that no attempt should be made to anticipate the decisions of the Muslim League on the communal settlement. The Council of the All-India Muslim League will meet at Lahore on 30th July, and according to the newspapers, will consider a resolution put forward by a member from the United Provinces (a Mr Lari, who is, I understand, opposed to Jinnah in this matter) recommending the adoption of Rajagopalachari's "formula" with certain modifications and the appointment of a Committee of three to discuss it further with Gandhi.

It is impossible to say how things will go, and for the debate in the House of Commons I have advised you to stick to the Cripps declaration but to make no attempt to restate His Majesty's Government's position in detail. You will by now have had my cables[7] on this subject.

3. I have had a further letter[8] from Sapru, a copy of which went to Turnbull by the bag of 16th July. There is nothing in it, and he is still very sour.

4. Mudaliar seems to have made a fairly good start on coal, and the deterioration in June is not as bad as we expected. Apart from the labour problem, which is still giving a good deal of difficulty, Mudaliar thinks one of the main factors affecting output is the attitude of the colliery owners to war-time taxation. It

[7] Nos. 581, 586 and 587. [8] No. 571.

is the old problem of wasting assets, and Mudaliar is suggesting to the Finance Member some concessions. I do not know how far we can go to meet the colliery owners; they are probably making much more money than they admit. But their contention is that the profits on many mines are now negligible and that for some it is impossible to find the money for necessary improvements.

[Para. 5, on the provision of facilities in India for the United Press of America, omitted.]

6. Mackay recently delivered to Jenkins a summary of the provisions of the Agreement between Australia and New Zealand of 21st January 1944, with an oral message that the Commonwealth Government would like at some time to negotiate a similar Agreement with India. The heads of the Australian Agreement with New Zealand deal with joint planning for the Armistice and subsequent negotiations; security and defence; civil aviation; matters concerning sovereignty in the Pacific Islands and the welfare and advancement of the native population; migration, discussions between Australia and New Zealand, Holland and Portugal, about security development and connected matters in the Pacific; and the establishment of a permanent machinery and a permanent secretariat for discussions between Australia and New Zealand. Most of these matters are of no direct interest to India, and India is not at present in a position to discuss security and defence without reference to His Majesty's Government. At the same time I think India should endeavour to come much closer to Australia and New Zealand, especially the former, for economic and defence matters. Australia might be able to give India a good deal of help on the technical side of industry, and although agricultural conditions in Australia are different from ours, there has, I think, been recent development of high quality in the canning and other industries connected with agriculture. I am having the Commonwealth Government suggestion examined in the Departments concerned, and will inform you of the result. If we can make a useful list of subjects for discussion with Australia it would be a good plan to arrange a conference at leisure. All this is educative for the Commonwealth Relations Department, and I welcome any development that makes my colleagues in Council think of India as a country dealing with other Commonwealth countries on equal terms.

I was recently shown a suggestion for the settlement of discharged Indian soldiers on land in Northern Australia in areas unsuitable for white settlement, with the idea of providing for the defence of N. Australia. I will have the idea examined, but I am doubtful of its practicability.

7. The Food Department are still in difficulties about the business member of the Famine Commission. Kumararaja Sir M. A. Muthiah Chettiar declined to serve, and Srivastava has decided to ask for Mr. Justice Kania of Bombay who has been acting Chief Justice during Stone's absence on the enquiry into

the Bombay explosion. I gather that Kania is a Judge with considerable experience of commercial cases, and would fill the bill quite well. Colville has reported that he could be made available early in August. In the meantime Woodhead was due in New Delhi on 17th July, and will, I expect, spend ten days or so there before moving to Bengal. He is coming today to stay with me in Simla for a day or two.

8. I have your telegram[9] about the chairman for Casey's enquiry into the administrative system in Bengal. I am taking advice from the Home Department, but my own opinion is that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to carry out a full-dress enquiry into service problems during a war. The Provinces would not like it, and if a Royal Commission were appointed in order to overcome Provincial opposition, there would be great delay, and constitutional changes might easily occur before the Commission's report could be written and dealt with. I think the India Office have a wrong idea about Rowland's activities. Constitutionally we can concern ourselves only with the all-India and Central Services. It is for the Provinces to initiate their own enquiries and take their own decisions about the Provincial Services. What we want is to make sure that they do pay adequate attention to service problems, and do not (for example) suddenly ask for Central assistance in securing technical and professional personnel in large numbers. In Provincial matters Rowland can give advice and act as a co-ordinator. He can also draw attention to cases of uneven development—for example, in some Provinces the medical and public health services are far more advanced than in others. But he is not conducting a "single-handed enquiry" in the sense your telegram seems to indicate. The Government of the United Provinces have already written to the Home Department saying that they resent interference from the Centre and are quite capable of managing their own affairs. The other Provinces are likely to co-operate, and I have no doubt that the Government of the United Provinces will fall into line. But the subject is not an easy one, and the more the Provinces will do for themselves the better I should be pleased. For example, Casey's enquiry, if it comes off, would relieve Rowland of much of the work he would otherwise have to do for Bengal. Assuming that I advise, and you agree, that a full-dress enquiry is out of the question, you will have to consider whether to refuse to help Casey. If so, he will either drop the idea of enquiry, or, more probably, try to find a chairman in India or from home by private correspondence. If his Ministers are in full agreement with him, he can, I suppose, recruit his chairman on their behalf as he thinks best.

9. Many thanks for your telegram[10] on Casey's political troubles. I am glad we have Cabinet backing for Section 93 if it becomes necessary. We will avoid it if possible. There are no new developments except that S. P. Mukerjee has

[9] No. 580. [10] No. 583.

agreed with rather a bad grace to meet Nazimuddin to discuss possible changes in the Secondary Education Bill.

10. I agree that we can postpone a settlement of the succession to Raisman until September or October, but we must allow ourselves plenty of time. These things always seem to take months.

[Para. 11, on a possible opening in India for Dr C. L. Katial, omitted.]

12. Kashmir is due back within the next few days. I am glad you think he benefited by the visit, and note your commendation of Hailey. I had a letter from Kashmir about his visit, and he seemed to be pleased with it.

13. This letter goes from Simla. We came up on the 13th as arranged, and expect to return to New Delhi on the 25th July. I shall probably pay a short visit to the scene of the recent fighting at Imphal and Kohima early in August. Everyone agrees that the Nagas did magnificent work in helping us; Manipuris not quite so good, they are a softer people.

14. I have had talks up here with Glancy and Sir Chhotu Ram. They seem to think that the Unionist Ministry should now hold its own against Jinnah's efforts to disrupt it. I will see Khizar again before I go down.

[PS., on difficulties of Consuls in Persia, omitted.]

594

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET

INDIA OFFICE, *20 July 1944*
Received: 26 July

It has just been decided that we are to have the India debate on August 1st and my hope and expectation is that the majority of speakers will concentrate on reconstruction problems rather than on Gandhi's little flurry. That certainly will be my intention in winding up and I shall try to be as brief as I can on the Gandhi side of things. It is really a curious example of wishful thinking that everybody should talk as if Gandhi had made some great new constructive move, when, so far at any rate as the question of an interim national government is concerned, he has not in fact advanced beyond the Congress terms which Cripps had to reject, not only in order to guarantee effective support for the war, but also to safeguard the minorities against the whole future position being prejudged against them. In one respect indeed his proposal is not even as good as that: for apparently he does not contemplate India taking any part in

the cost of military operations conducted in her own territory. As for his partial approach towards Jinnah, it obviously hasn't satisfied the latter, though we may hear rather more about it when that gentleman meets the Muslim League.

2. I am afraid I could do nothing to encourage your hope[1] that Winston might say something helpful either about the India situation generally or about India's sterling balances. The most I have been able to do for the last year or two is to prevent his going off the deep end on the latter. On that theme he has a complete obsession, in which he is encouraged by the nefarious Cherwell. Happily John Anderson is sane on the subject—his statement[2] the other day may have been helpful to you—and the report[3] of the Cabinet Committee on the question should do a good deal to steady things and perhaps even to enable Winston to see the thing in its proper perspective—that is, if he will read the paper, which is rather doubtful.

3. My own view is that we should never treat this business as a debt at all. India and all the other countries concerned have been paid in full already, for a credit at the Bank of England or a treasury bill is, or should be regarded as being, just as good as cash. The problem is therefore not one of paying a debt, but of all the holders of sterling, in this country and outside of it, realising that they are all in the same boat, and that it is not to their interest to depreciate the value of their assets. If India rushes to America to spend a lot of her sterling there, she will inevitably depreciate the value of the rest of her sterling holding and incidentally of her own currency in relation to the outside world. On the other hand, if she buys here or anywhere in the sterling area, that does not happen. More than that, if she can sell a large part of her exports within the sterling area, the reduction of her sterling assets is *pro tanto* postponed and more remains to be utilised for her own benefit later. Everything in fact depends for all of us on maintaining that confidence in sterling which we all showed in 1931 when the United Kingdom came off gold. That means that we must all agree upon a common policy of maintaining confidence in sterling and of the orderly liquidation of temporarily surplus assets in any one country's hands. Nothing would prejudice that prospect more than our talking about being "broke", or having shouldered an indebtedness beyond our powers to repay, or our intention to cavil at repayment. But you will realise my difficulty in making the kind of statement I should like to make now or that I think will have to be made one of these days.

[Para. 4, on Mr Linklater's present non-availability to write a book on the Indian Army; para. 5, on an introduction given to Captain Kurshed Lalkaka; and para. 6, on a misunderstanding over a remark of Lord Leathers, omitted.]

[1] See No. 587. [2] See No. 591, note 2. [3] See No. 578, note 4.

7. Munster will be dealing with the food situation in the Lords next week and I shall no doubt have something to say on the subject on the first. In view of the danger of Firoz's speaking over the B.B.C. somewhat unguardedly, it has seemed to me better, if it could conveniently be arranged, to let his broadcast follow these two debates, so as to avoid the possible awkwardness of my being questioned with regard to any statement that he may make. The broadcast should be none-the-less useful because far more people will hear it than will read that portion of the debates which deals with the subject.

8. Generally speaking, the House is in the end of term mood and longing to get away for the next few weeks. What may happen in the interval no one can say. At the moment everybody is jubilant over Montgomery's push at Caen. My own recollection of these pushes under Western Front conditions is that they rarely get beyond a semi-circular bulge not much deeper than half the width of the front of attack. So I doubt very much whether we are in full march upon Paris, or whether we are only adding a limited percentage to the one per cent. or so of France which we occupy. From the purely military point of view that may be enough to affect the whole situation materially. On the other hand, politically it may be awkward if the Russians get to Berlin before we get to Paris or Milan.

595

Sir M. Hallett (United Provinces) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/275: ff 65–6

SECRET *20 July 1944*

No. U.P. 236

3. Now to pass on to a less pleasant subject, the political situation. If I had written a week ago, I should have emphasised the danger of the communal situation developing very unfavourably. The Muslim correspondent of the *Statesman*, Shaheed, who is presumably moderate, in an article on Monday July 10th, put forward some pungent criticism of Gandhi's idea of truth and described him as "pseudo-mystical, disingenuous, self-contradictory and incomprehensible". That was with reference to the published correspondence and Gandhi's letter of July 15, 1944.[1] He has written an equally vigorous article a week later. I hope you saw these two articles. Then came Jinnah's rejection or half rejection of Rajagopalachari's proposal which had Gandhi's blessing. I suppose the real reason for the rejection was that Jinnah held that Gandhi had offered the Muslims a blank cheque, knowing that his followers would repudiate it. That was the description which I heard of Gandhi's tactics at the time of the Round Table Conference. But more recently there has been such a spate

of statements by Gandhi or on his behalf that it is difficult to size up the position. Gandhi has got back into his limelight with a vengeance and I was not surprised that the Nawab of Rampur, whom I met recently, asked why we allowed all this stuff to be published when there was a war on. Obviously we cannot stop it but I do feel that it is dangerous. You refer in your letter of 10th July[2] to the deterioration in the tone of the *Hindustan Times*; I am glad you have noticed this, for I was intending to invite your attention to the way in which it splashed the rumour that Government held up a letter from Roosevelt to Gandhi, with a big headline "Churchill resents Roosevelt's interest in India". The *Leader* has been even worse; it is of course owned now by Birla. I still think there is danger of communal trouble but much depends on the line which Jinnah takes, and we must await the meeting of the League Working Committee. There are also signs which I gather from reading these papers, that to avoid the communal issue, Congress are attacking Government, e.g. Gandhi's reference to the treatment of detenus. I can see little hope of any solution of deadlock as a result of Gandhi's utterances which Shaheed describes as "self-contradictory, non-committal and confusion-creating." There is nothing really constructive in them and we must await further developments. I trust Your Excellency will not enter into negotiation.

4. I am most grateful to Your Excellency for sending me your full correspondence[3] with Sapru. You had specially said it was not for publication, but the *Leader* refers to the fact that Sapru's letter of April last and the memorandum was not acknowledged by you till last week. "The delay in the acknowledgment was probably due to inevitable circumstances and His Excellency has indicated to Sir Tej with reference to the memorandum that he is studying the subject." Perhaps Sapru was put in a difficult position but he might have restrained the *Leader* from making any reference to it, instead of letting it convey the impression that you had delayed in answering his letter. I am afraid these people never miss any opportunity of making insinuations against Government or against Your Excellency.

5. I am afraid that I am rather prejudiced against Sapru and Jagdish Prasad, not so much because of their support of Congress but mainly because they have done not a hand's turn in regard to war work; Sapru has been too busy with cases, such as the Rewa case and the B. B. Singh case, and his professional practice. He has made no real attempt to deal with the communal problem or to establish contact with Jinnah or the Muslims. Neither he nor Jagdish have ever made any attempt to establish contact with me or my officers, or to discuss with me any problems which have arisen in the province. I hope they do not

[1] No. 584.
[2] Relevant para. in Wavell Papers, Official Correspondence: India, Oct. 1943–Dec. 1944, p. 261.
[3] See Nos. 481, 520, 546, 569, and 571.

regard me as inaccessible; if they do, they are wrong. But I think that I might have reasonably expected two ex-Members of the Viceroy's Council to come to me if they thought that my policy was wrong; I would certainly have listened to them.

6. I am most grateful for the line which you have taken, in particular for the defence you put forward in your letter of 28th May, of Section 93 administration. You refer to Bombay but I think that you might have said much the same about the U.P! Your main point, however, is that there should be a business Government during the war, and that drastic constitutional changes cannot be made during war time. Gandhi's suggestion that a "National Government" should take over all civil administration merely leaving the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief to run the purely military side would lead to confusion worse confounded. As I realise more and more every day, civil and military administration is so closely interlinked that any attempt at dyarchy would kill war effort. I am afraid that I must plead guilty to the charge of wishing to retain power, because I hold very strong opinions based on experience of the incompetency of politicians, to whatever party they may belong.

596

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 158

IMMEDIATE
PRIVATE
SECRET

INDIA OFFICE, *21 July 1944*

175–S.C. Your telegram No. 621[1] of 19th July. Gandhi. I have no comments on lines you intend to take except that Gandhi–Jinnah proposals have not been before Jinnah for a year or more. Rajagopalachari had apparently discussed them with Gandhi when he saw him during his fast a year or so ago, but as far as we know they were communicated to Jinnah on 8th April this year. It would also be safer not to say that negotiations had been declared at an end. Rajagopalachari makes distinction between private negotiation and consideration of his formula by all concerned including Moslem League after its publication in press. Formula is likely to come before Working Committee and Council of League at end of this month. I suggest you say that though proposals have been before Jinnah for several months no conclusions have been reached and Indian opinion on them including opinion of Moslem League is still not clear.

2. I am sorry Prime Minister will not make statement. There is a great lack of confidence in H.M.G.'s good faith in dealing with political problem, and

question of sterling balances seems to have been handled lately in such a way as to increase Indian suspicions. I am afraid that Anderson has done little to alleviate suspicion.

[1] No. 591.

597

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Gandhi[1]

L/P&J/8/519: f 237

22 July 1944

Dear Mr Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter of 15th July.[2] I have seen the statements you made to Mr Gelder, and your subsequent explanation of them. I do not think I can usefully comment at present, except to repeat what I said in my last letter[3] that if you will submit to me a definite and constructive policy I shall be glad to consider it.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

[1] Lord Wavell sent the text of this reply, together with the text of No. 584, to Mr Amery in tel. 1449–S of 26 July. Lord Wavell's letter is reprinted in D. G. Tendulkar, *Mahatma, Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, 8 vols. (Bombay, Jhaveri and Tendulkar, 1951–4), vol. 6, p. 327.
[2] No. 584. [3] No. 544.

598

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/18: f 74

PRIVATE *24 July 1944*

188–S.C. Your private telegram No. 605[1] of 14th July. Enquiry into Bengal administration.

2. Your paragraphs Nos. 1 and 2. I agree that Casey's enquiry would overlap famine enquiry to some extent. I pointed this out to him but he represented that he must go ahead at once. I am now suggesting to him that he postpone the enquiry at least until famine enquiry Commission have completed examination of Bengal.

3. Your paragraph No. 3. There would be no repeat no overlap with enquiry by Rowland whose main function is to extract information and proposals from

[1] No. 580.

Provinces and co-ordinate the results. Casey's enquiry would make Rowland's task easier.

4. Your paragraphs Nos. 4 to 7. Home Member, with whom I agree, advises strongly against formation of all-Indian Committee of [? or] Royal Commission. Constitutionally Provinces are free to work out their own proposals and much spade work must be done before any formal enquiry could be held. Also in war conditions Committee or Royal Commission on long term service problems would be an intolerable nuisance.

5. I recommend you to wait until Casey replies to my suggestion that enquiry should be postponed so as to avoid overlap with famine enquiry. In the meantime I make no comment about possible Chairman.

599

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/193: ff 84–6

No. R-22–G.C.P. *25–26 July 1944*

5. I also have been much puzzled by Gandhi's latest pronouncements. I append an extract from the Nagpur Central Intelligence Officer's report dated the 21st July. Probably you will see the substance of this report in another form but it may interest you as it stands. My own feeling is that Gandhi is still primarily the astute politician seeking to out-manœuvre Government and I concur in Your Excellency's reading of the position.

Judging from local press reactions, Gandhi has succeeded in mystifying his friends as much as his enemies. What for lack of a better term can be described as our "moderate" papers gave his statements the traditional and almost automatic support which one expects. But the most intransigent of our Congress organs was at great pains to point out in an editorial that the statements evidenced no real change in the Congress attitude either towards Government or towards Pakistan. There have been recently in another connection references in the press to Napoleon's dictum that a dictator cannot afford to make an error. Gandhi is a dictator and a dictator round whom more than the usual legend of omniscience and infallibility has been built up. The "old guard" Congress press which has done so much to build up that legend cannot appreciate seeing its work destroyed by any confession of unwisdom in Gandhi's past political manœuvrings. Dr Khare mentioned to me how greatly Gandhi's prestige had been affected by the blunder of the August 1942 resolution and this is confirmed by a report just to hand that the detenus recently released are of the same

opinion. Khare still favours the release of all Security prisoners as he considers that there is no possibility of a revival of civil disobedience. I expect he thinks it might be well to hedge a little against the future. I disagree with him because although I think that some of the Security prisoners—but not, I should say, the ones with an all-India reputation, such as the members of the Working Committee—have learnt much since August 1942, I should hate to see a return, while the war is still on, to the situation which obtained for several months before August 1942 when Congress leaders were in full possession of the columns of the nationalist press and were delivering objectionable speeches throughout the country.

As the Chief Secretary's report[1] shows, the number of my Security prisoners is now only 137. The really dangerous people are, I think, the members of the Working Committee and they, of course, are the concern of the Central Government but their detention or release is a matter which must affect the internal situation in every province.

Local intelligence is that Gandhi's supremacy in this Province, as a result of his endorsement of Rajagopalachari's formula, is likely to meet with a strong challenge. My own belief is that the Rajagopalachari formula will split the Congress from top to bottom but it is always possible Gandhi will explain away his adherence to it. It will be interesting to see the reactions of the Muslim League to Rajagopalachari's "offer" but personally I cannot see the League falling into the trap of a joint plebiscite of Hindus and Muslims in "districts"—an expression which has not been defined.

Yours sincerely,
H. J. TWYNAM

Enclosure to No. 599

EXTRACT[2] FROM THE C.P. AND BERAR C.I.O.'S DAILY REPORT NO. 74 OF 1944, DATED THE 21ST JULY 1944

Congress.—An important meeting of Congressmen was held in Bombay in the 3rd week of June, 1944. Important Congressmen of the Gandhian group from this Province, including Tatyaji Wazalwar, Shreemant Narayan Agarwal, Principal, Commerce College, Wardha, and P. Y. Deshpande attended the meeting which concluded on the 21st June. Gandhi was present but efforts to find out where the meeting was held, the names of those from other provinces attending it and details of discussion were not successful. The only positive information of importance secured was that Gandhi has in mind the starting of another civil disobedience movement after the conclusion of the war. The basis of this movement will be the grievances of the Indian people arising from the post-war resettlement, and all Gandhi's present moves are directed towards

[1] Not printed. [2] Only this extract is on the India Office file.

that end. His idea is to reconstruct the Congress organisation and, if possible, place it in a position of vantage and power. His argument is that, just as the Congress became stronger as a result of the Congress ministry experiment, so will it gather even greater strength by taking part in the National Government experiment, so that, when the moment comes, it will be in a position to launch a movement of irresistible force. The money collected in the name of the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Fund will, he considers, also indirectly assist in this preparation, not only through the beneficiaries and their families but also through the large staff of Congressmen and Congress sympathisers to be employed by the Fund.

The above information, though secondhand, is considered reliable. If, in due course, it becomes possible to enlarge on it or to give a more detailed appreciation of its value, a further reference will follow.

600

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 239

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *26 July 1944, 9.55 pm*
Received: 26 July, 8.15 pm

No. 1450–S. India Debate. I made statement in Council this morning on the lines of my telegram No. 164–S.C.[1] of 15th July and explained how you intended to handle Gandhi's moves in Debate on Friday. All members were present except Benthall and Ambedkar, and of course Firoz. They had seen full report of yesterday's Debate[2] in the Lords which appeared in this morning's papers.

2. Council agreed unanimously with line we have taken and made three suggestions. *First* instead of saying that question of Gandhi's interview with myself or Working Committee would be for me to consider, you should place responsibility on Governor-General in Council. Sultan Ahmad and Roy stressed this point and their colleagues agreed. *Second* Srivastava and Jogendra Singh said that Rajagopalachari's proposals were entirely unacceptable to Hindu Mahasabha and Sikh communities respectively, and asked that you should if possible refer in your speech to public announcements of Mahasabha and representative Sikhs to this effect. *Third* Azizul Haque, Khare and others thought that Government of India should make constructive attempt at a solution, possibly through Members of Council.

3. I agree on first and see no objection to second which I must however leave to you. There is no doubt both Mahasabha and Sikhs would much appreciate

indication that you have their apprehensions in mind. I will examine third further.

4. Council were solidly behind us in holding that National Government of Gandhi's type with Governor-General's reserved powers eliminated and existing Central Legislature, even if re-constituted by general election, would be quite impossible. Establishment of such a government would cause gravest concern to Moslems and other minorities, and would mean transfer of power to Congress without guarantee that new constitution would be even considered and with strong probability that any new constitution proposed would neglect minority rights. Hindu Members pointed out that Congress could not negotiate with Moslems for Hindu community, and that communal negotiations to be effective should be between the League and Mahasabha. This may be an extreme view, but is probably gaining ground among (? Hindu)s.

5. I hope to telegraph tomorrow Press reactions on the Lords debate.

[1] No. 581. [2] Parl. Debs., 5th ser., H. of L., vol. 132, 25 July 1944, cols. 1095–1121.

601

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/E/9/1525: f 738

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *26 July 1944, 11.55 pm*

16562. External Affairs Department will have received copies of various Dominions Office telegrams[1] regarding proposed exploratory discussions at Washington on official level with U.S., Soviet and Chinese Governments on subject of future world organisation. Copies of five Memoranda which will be handed to these Governments were enclosed with Turnbull's letter to Jenkins of 20th July.[2]

2. It now appears likely that discussions may start at beginning of next month. It is being arranged that Bajpai should be kept in touch with discussions in order that he may give Delegation his advice where necessary and may let Government of India know of any developments concerning them. He will be given copies of memoranda at same time as other Dominion representatives in Washington.

[1] and [2] Not printed.

602

Sir R. Campbell to Mr Eden

Telegram, L/P&S/12/4629: f 258

IMPORTANT

WASHINGTON, *26 July 1944, 1.56 am*
Received: 26 July, 12.35 pm

No. 4023. My immediately following telegram contains text of an article by Drew Pearson in this morning's *Washington Post.*

2. I called on Mr Hull this afternoon to invite his attention to the article which I said would create an extremely bad impression in London and in India.

3. Mr Hull said he had not read the article, he never did read Drew Pearson and so he was not aware of what had been written. I told him that the article purported to publish text of greater part of a report from Mr William Phillips to the President and that Pearson's remarks also to some extent implicated State Department. Besides references to the Indian army which would make a particularly bad impression in India, I drew particular attention to Mr Phillips' alleged remarks concerning the part the United Kingdom would play in the war against Japan. I said that after many spontaneous declarations on this subject by His Majesty's Government these remarks would be considered particularly unfortunate in the United Kingdom and by our Naval and Military authorities.

4. Mr Hull reminded me that the President had publicly described Pearson as a chronic liar and that it could only be said that the text he had published "purported" to be authentic. There was only one person in State Department who could have given or shown such a text to Pearson and that was Welles, whose relations with Pearson had been particularly close. In fact Welles used to show Pearson documents and with him concoct attacks on Mr Hull himself.

5. Mr Hull then expressed extreme regret over the article and said he would at once read it and go into the matter. I propose to follow this up further.

603

Sir R. Campbell to Mr Eden

Telegram, L/P&S/12/4629: f 259

IMPORTANT
EN CLAIR

WASHINGTON, *26 July 1944, 11.5 am*
Received: 26 July, 4.20 pm

No. 4024. My immediately preceding telegram text of article is as follows:

"As the war moves faster in Asia administration advisers are convinced that the ticklish problem of India which Roosevelt repeatedly has postponed must be tackled soon. Each time the President has discussed India with Winston Churchill he has received a blunt cold shoulder. Once, last year when United States Ambassador, William Phillips, after his return to this country from India talked to the Prime Minister at F.D.R.'s request Churchill banged the table and said 'I have always been right about Hitler and everyone else in Europe. I am also right about Indian policy, any change in Indian policy now will mean a blood bath'; at about the time Phillips talked to Churchill he also submitted a report to President Roosevelt which will be the basis for any new United States proposals to Britain. In this report Ambassador Phillips, generally considered pro-British, made some critical forthright statements about British policy. 'It is time for the British to act' he wrote President Roosevelt 'this they can do by a solemn declaration from the King-Emperor that India will achieve her independence at a specific date after the war. I feel strongly Mr. President that in view of our military position in India we should have a voice in these matters. It is not right for the British to say this is none of your business when we alone presumably will have the major part to play in the struggle with Japan'.

Ambassador Phillips' report is considered so important inside the State Department and the whole Indian picture is so vital to Allied success in Asia that a large part of his report follows:

'Dear Mr. President: May I add a few words to what I said to you on Tuesday afternoon when I had the pleasure of giving you an oral report on my impressions of the Indian situation. Assuming that India is known to be an important base for our future operations against Burma and Japan it would seem to be of the highest importance that we should have around us a sympathetic India rather than an indifferent and possibly hostile India. It would appear that we will have the prime responsibility in the conduct of the war against Japan. There is no evidence that the British intend to do more than give token assistance. If that is so then the conditions surrounding our base in India become of vital importance. At present the Indian people are at war only in a legal sense, Indians feel they have no voice in the Government and therefore no responsibility

in the conduct of the war. They feel that they have nothing to fight for as they are convinced that the professed war aims of the United Nations do not apply to them. The British Prime Minister in fact has stated that the provisions of the Atlantic Charter are not applicable to India and it is not unnatural therefore that Indian leaders are beginning to wonder whether the Charter is only for the benefit of the white races. The present Indian Army is purely mercenary. General Stilwell has expressed his concern over the situation and in particular in regard to the poor morale of the Indian officers. The attitude of the general public towards the war is even worse, lassitude and indifference and bitterness have increased as a result of the famine conditions, the growing high cost of living and continued political deadlock. While India is broken politically into various parties and groups all have one object in common, eventual freedom and independence from British domination.

'Time for British to act.

'There would seem to be only one remedy to this highly unsatisfactory situation in which we are unfortunately but nevertheless seriously involved and that is to change the attitude of the people of India toward this war, make them feel that we want them to assume responsibilities to the United Nations and are prepared to give them facilities for doing so. The present political conditions do not permit of any improvement in this respect. Even though the British should fail again it is high time that they should make an effort to improve conditions and re-establish confidence among the Indian people that their future independence is to be granted. Words are of no avail, they only aggravate the present situation, it is time for the British to act. This they can do by a solemn declaration from the King-Emperor that India will achieve her independence at a specific date after the war and that as a guarantee of good faith in this respect a provisional representative coalition Government will be re-established at the centre and limited powers transferred to it.

'Much at stake for United States. I feel strongly Mr. President that in view of our military position in India we should have a voice in these matters. It is not right for the British to say this is none of your business when we alone presumably will have the major part to play in the struggle with Japan. If we do nothing and merely accept the British point of view that conditions in India are none of our business, then we must be prepared for various serious consequences in the internal situation in India which may develop as a result of the despair and misery and anti-white sentiments of hundreds of millions of subject people; the peoples of Asia—and I am supported in this opinion by other diplomatic and military observers—cynically regard this war as one between Fascist and Imperialist powers. A generous British gesture to India would change this undesirable political atmosphere, India itself might then be expected more positively to support our war against Japan. China, which regards the Anglo-American bloc with misgivings and mistrust might then

be assured that we are in truth fighting for a better world and the Colonial people conquered by the Japanese might hopefully feel that they have something better to look forward to than simply a return to their old masters. Such a gesture, Mr President, will produce not only a tremendous psychological stimulus to flagging morale through Asia and facilitate our military operations in that theatre, but it will also be proof positive to all peoples—our own and the British included—that this is not a war of power politics but a war for all we say it is.'"

604

Mr Savarkar to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/683: ff 56–7

BOMBAY, *26 July 1944, 8.55 pm*

Hindu Mahasabha the only all India representative body of Hindus condemns emphatically Gandhiji's proposal to vivisect India allowing Moslems to form separate independent states. Gandhiji or the Congress cannot represent Hindus. Thousands of resolutions and meeting of Hindusabhites continue to condemn the demand of provincial self determination to secede from the central government. Hindusabhites can never tolerate breaking up of union of India their fatherland and holyland.[1]

SAVARKAR
President all India Hindu Mahasabha

[1] On 1 August, Mr Gibson minuted that he did not consider it necessary to acknowledge this tel. L/P&J/8/683.

605

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 235

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *27 July 1944, 2.10 pm*
Received: 27 July, 12.30 pm

1454–S. Reactions to the Lords debate.[1] Gandhi has expressed disappointment. He admits Munster summarised his proposals correctly and says they are the most constructive he can make. His Majesty's Government have, however, not accepted them even as basis for friendly discussion and permission to see Working Committee. Gandhi reluctantly comes to the conclusion that His Majesty's Government do not want fair solution of the deadlock. He knows

[1] See No. 600, note 2.

he can do nothing without response from His Majesty's Government. He regrets that bogey of communal differences was raised in the debate. Rajagopalachari has challenged British statesman to produce an alternative plan for communal settlement, and with reference to Munster's speech says intention about Governor-General's reserve powers was that they should be kept in abeyance by convention.

2. Newspapers will probably reserve opinions until after Commons debate. Today's reaction in *Hindustan Times* is that Gandhi's proposal for National Government has been misunderstood, and that his National Government was intended to be within the framework of the present constitution. Reduction in Governor-General's powers was to be by convention only. You may expect Gandhi's supporters to stress alleged resemblance between his National Government and interim Government contemplated in Cripps proposals.

606

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/P&S/12/4564: f 20

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *27 July 1944*

D.O. No. F. 430/2/GG/43

My dear Leo,

There seems to be a possibility that the end of the war may come suddenly and before we expect it. The moment an Armistice with Germany is in sight there will be a clamour in India for strong representation at the Peace Conference. I presume that India's right to representation is recognised. She was a contracting party to the Treaty of Versailles and other international treaties which followed. She was an original member of the League of Nations. Since the war started she has been one of the few member States that have been contributing towards the maintenance of the League. Apart from these considerations, her war services have been on such a scale as clearly to entitle her to representation at the Peace Conference. I imagine there will be no doubt that H.M.G. will recognise India's right to representation, especially as she was a party to the declaration[1] signed on behalf of the 26 United Nations at Washington in January 1942, but I should like to have the point clearly established and to be able to announce the result when convenient.

Yours,

ARCHIE

[1] Cmd. 6388. The signatories of this Declaration pledged themselves to employ their full military and economic resources against the Axis Powers and not to make a separate armistice or peace with them.

607

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *27 July 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 13th July 1944.[1] The Low cartoon is a good one, though he has not hit off Jinnah very well.

2. The food situation is much the same. The monsoon seems rather stronger, and most of the Governors are more hopeful. There has been a good deal of rain in Delhi.

The Food Department have agreed[2] to French's visit,[3] which will, I hope, be useful both to us and to His Majesty's Government. They are, however, asking you[4] to reconsider the announcement to be made at home about it. Their view is that an announcement to the effect that French had been invited to come out here to study the Indian food problem, might, in the present state of feeling, lead to criticism and arouse speculation and false hopes. The anti-British press would at once ask why His Majesty's Government had failed to keep themselves fully informed, and if the visit were not immediately followed by some favourable announcement at your end, there would be considerable disappointment. I agree that French should come out here quite informally, and adequate publicity can be given to the visit later if it leads to anything.

I mentioned in paragraph 7 of my last letter[5] the Food Department's difficulty in finding a business member for the Famine Commission. Kania, the Bombay Judge, declined to serve on grounds of ill-health, and Srivastava finally selected Sir Manilal Nanavati, who, as you probably know, served for a good many years in Baroda, and was later a Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank. He has written on rural economics, and is probably quite a good choice. The Commission is now assembling here, and I have had a talk with Woodhead who came to stay with me in Simla. His appointment as Chairman seems to have been well received, and I think he still carries a good deal of weight in Bengal. There is difficulty about accommodation for the Commission in Calcutta, and Woodhead does not think it will be possible to move there before the end of the first week in August. He wants to decide during the next few days the relations of the Commission with Travancore and Cochin. The enquiry would be incomplete without a fairly detailed examination of conditions in these two States last year and the measures taken in them to relieve distress. It seems certain that

[1] No. 578. [2] In tel. 9708 of 24 July from Mr Hutchings to Mr Dibdin. L/E/8/3358.
[3] See No. 535, para. 3.
[4] In tel. 9703 of 24 July from G. of I., Food Dept. to S. of S. L/E/8/3358. [5] No. 593.

neither the Travancore nor the Cochin Government would like an enquiry by a Commission reporting to the Governor-General in Council or the Crown Representative, but they might agree to the Commission reporting to themselves. Alternatively Woodhead might make it clear to the two States that an official account from them of the food crisis and the manner in which it was handled would be of great value to the Commission and that he would like to hear representatives of both Governments as witnesses. There would then be no special report to any authority, but the facts about Travancore and Cochin would be brought in as part of a general picture.

3. Gandhi has been relatively silent since I last wrote. He is still at Panchgani, but is said to be going to Sevagram before very long. I am sending by this bag a copy of a letter he sent me a few days ago[6] and of my reply.[7] He said that I doubtless had seen his statements to Gelder and that he hoped I might now grant one of the two requests made in his earlier letter[8] presumably to see either the Working Committee or me. In my reply I said that I had seen the statements and could only repeat that if he had any constructive suggestions to make, I should be glad to consider them.

There is still no clear indication of what the Muslim League will do at the meetings to be held in Lahore on the last two or three days of this month. Judging from *Dawn* Jinnah will probably work for the outright rejection of Rajagopalachari's formula. In the meantime there still seems to be uncertainty and dissatisfaction in the Congress camp and among the Hindus generally. Many of Gandhi's followers and the whole of the Mahasabha dislike Rajagopalachari's proposals, and the plan for a "National Government" and the form in which Gandhi put it out have caused a good deal of confusion. All the same the Congress newspapers are still playing up the possibility of a settlement, and are stressing (quite wrongly, I think) the novelty of Gandhi's latest ideas. Repeated assertions that there is little difference between his plan and the Cripps proposals seem to have taken in a good many people, including some high officials who have not refreshed their memories by re-reading the Draft Declaration.[9]

I have sent you a telegram[10] about my statement to Council on 26th July, on Gandhi's latest moves and the line you propose to take in Parliament. I have just sent you another[11] giving very briefly this morning's reactions to the debate in the Lords. I need not add much to these telegrams. My colleagues, with only Benthall, Ambedkar and Firoz absent, gave us their unanimous support and only made a few suggestions on points of detail. As usual they are anxious that responsibility for dealing with matters such as a renewed request from Gandhi for an interview with me or with the Working Committee should rest with the Governor-General in Council and not with me personally. I think this is quite reasonable. Srivastava for the Mahasabha, and Jogendra

Singh for the Sikhs, pointed out that Rajagopalachari's proposals were quite unacceptable to the Hindu and Sikh community, and asked for some mention of this to be included in your speech. Jogendra Singh's plea was reinforced later in the day by Gyani Sher Singh and Gyani Kartar Singh, two of the Sikh leaders, who had a long interview with Jenkins,[12] and trotted out the usual apprehensions of a minority community. The only other important point taken in Council was that the Government of India ought to do something constructive. Azizul Haque made this suggestion and I am considering it, but I am not sure that any of the members can influence the major communities, and it is difficult to see what can be done until the Muslim attitude is much clearer. Hallett thinks we are in for a period of acute communal trouble,[13] and he may be right. Munster seems to have spoken very well in the Lords.[14] His speech will of course be severely criticised in the Hindu press and the criticism has already begun. The line will be that there is practically no difference between Gandhi's plan for a National Government and the Interim Government provided for in the Cripps offer, and that His Majesty's Government are being obstructive and unreasonable. I hope your debate in the Commons goes well.

I send you by this bag a copy of a letter[15] from M. N. Roy enclosing a memorandum to you on the political situation. I have acknowledged Roy's letter and told him that the enclosure has been forwarded to you. As usual there is a good deal of sense in what he says, but clearly the changes advocated by him are not practicable at present. In fact universal suffrage in India would only make confusion worse confounded.

4. I agree with much of what you say in paragraphs 3 and 4 of your letter about the sterling balances. What has troubled me is not so much the technical difficulty of liquidating the balances, which is of course a matter for the experts, as the manner in which His Majesty's Government have approached the problem. Indians do not regard the sterling balances as ill-gotten gains of which they should be ashamed, and resent intensely suggestions that the British tax-payer has paid the entire cost of India's war. The right way to treat these people in a matter of this kind is to approach them on equal terms and to be perfectly frank. I believe that if His Majesty's Government had, at an appropriate moment, either invited a delegation from India to visit London or sent a delegation here and asked for friendly co-operation in dealing with the whole problem, they would have got it. The damage is now done, and Indian politicians and businessmen feel that they have been insulted and that His

[6] No. 584. [7] No. 597. [8] No. 539. [9] Vol. I, No. 456. [10] No. 600.
[11] No. 605.
[12] A Note of this interview is in Wavell Papers, Notes of Important Interviews, 1944–7, pp. 131–3.
[13] See No. 595. [14] See *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of L., vol. 132, 25 July 1944, cols. 1100–6.
[15] Dated 21 July 1944. L/P&J/8/513.

Majesty's Government will repudiate their liability if they can. As usual, the opinions expressed in the Indian newspapers are exaggerated and unfair, and I have no doubt that in the end His Majesty's Government will treat India fairly. But so far, they have been extraordinarily tactless, and will now have to overcome many unnecessary difficulties of their own making.

5. Thank you for sending me Firoz's pamphlet. I have telegraphed to him saying that I would sooner he did not publish it at present. My colleagues are naturally doing a certain amount of speaking on current politics—Khare recently had the courage to suggest a fifth freedom—"freedom from humbug", and Ambedkar has commented on the Rajagopalachari proposals. On the whole, however, I think it best for them to steer clear of the discussions between Gandhi and the Muslim League, at least until the position is less confused. Any statement by a Member of Council is apt to be torn to pieces and may be interpreted as a subtle move by ourselves to confuse the issues still further.

6. I have nothing special to report about provincial politics. There seems to be no change in Bengal and the Punjab. The Sind Ministry has weathered a small storm with the assistance of Jinnah who, at the Premier's request, called off an attack on the Ministry by the Provincial Muslim League.

In Orissa Lewis now expects the Section 93 régime to last for some time, and I am sanctioning the appointment of a second Adviser.

I recently had a talk with Baig, the new Central Organiser of the National War Front. He is an ex-Sheriff of Bombay and very well thought of both by Lumley and by Colville. He was for a time in the Indian Army, but retired young and went in for business and politics in Bombay with considerable success. I am sending you by this bag a copy of my letter,[16] dated 19th July, to Colville, in which, after my talk with Baig, I suggested that he might consider the substitution of non-official Advisers for his present official team. This question has of course been considered before,[17] and both Linlithgow and I came to the conclusion that on the whole it was probably better to appoint official Advisers than to attempt to give Section 93 a more popular covering. But I recognise that as time goes on I may have to modify my original view, and I always have the possibility of a change in mind. I will let you know what Colville thinks when I get his reply.

7. His Highness the Chancellor, who will be here during the next few days for the meeting of the National Defence Council, is to go over with me his preliminary list of subjects[18] for discussion with a small deputation of Princes in August or September. His most important points concern the attachment scheme and the subordination of Princes without their consent to authorities other than the Crown Representative, and the industrialisation of Indian States. There is, as you know, not very much I can say at the moment about attach-

ment and the future of the smaller States. I still have to reply to a letter[19] from you on this very difficult problem. As regards industrialisation, the Chancellor seems to think that the States will be left out in the cold while British India forges ahead. I doubt if he is right about this, as the States start with certain great advantages. A progressive Ruler and his Dewan can negotiate very quickly with industrialists, and legal formalities which take time in British India can be much shortened in a State. Few States levy income-tax of any kind, and many are prepared to go in for partnership arrangements with industry which would be difficult in British India. Trade Unions and Communist organisations are far more active in British India than in the average State, and although the more advanced States no doubt have laws regulating the working and living conditions of labour and so on, the industrialists probably find them less irksome than the corresponding laws in British India. Most of these advantages no doubt arise from the fact that the rule of law is less firmly established in the States than with us; but a powerful industrial concern which keeps on good terms with the Government of a State can generally hold its own and take any risk that may be involved. I should say that during the next twenty years we are likely to see a drift of industry into the States which, from the British Indian point of view, may lead to a dangerous evasion both of taxation and of control. Industry must of course follow raw materials, power, an adequate supply of labour and so on, and in many States, as in large rural tracts in the Provinces, industrialisation will be out of the question. But the progressive States such as Baroda, Mysore, Travancore, and possibly Hyderabad, can have very little to fear. You will have noticed that the demands of States figure largely in the lists of electrical equipment submitted to the India Office.

Another matter raised separately by the Chancellor is the right of the Princes to be consulted before the Government of India decide what line to take in international discussions. I have a good deal of sympathy with the Chancellor about this, and will look into his grievance with Wylie. It seems necessary to ensure that the States are not left out completely. On the other hand we cannot permit them to interfere in matters which are mainly the concern of British India; nor can we adopt a procedure which will delay our decisions. In many cases it will probably suffice if the Chancellor is told what is going on and what line the Government of India are taking.

8. I saw Dorman-Smith in Simla and discussed a number of points with him. The most important was his idea that the Tribal Areas in Burma, Assam, and possibly Bengal, should be formed into a separate unit and administered directly either by the Governor-General or by the Governor of Burma.

[16] L/P&J/8/591.
[17] See correspondence concluding with Vol. III, No. 331.
[18] See No. 585.
[19] No. 513.

You will remember discussing this in your room at the India Office with Dorman-Smith and myself shortly before I started for India. The idea is by no means new. The tribal experts in Assam have for many years taken the view that the tribes need an entirely separate administration and treatment; and in 1928, when the last instalment of Constitutional Reform was under discussion, one of the schemes put forward in a general way was for the establishment of a North-East Frontier Province rather on the lines now suggested by Dorman-Smith. In the end the arrangement for excluded and partially excluded areas embodied in the Government of India Act was proposed and accepted, and India and Burma retained their respective tribal areas. Constitutionally it would, I suppose, have been easy to make a separate Province when the Act of 1935 was being drafted; and when we reoccupy Burma it may be possible to make a fresh start there. From the Indian end, however, a change would not now be at all easy. The tribal areas are part of India, and it is very doubtful whether His Majesty's Government could now separate them from India except as part of the treaty arrangement contemplated in the Cripps Declaration. I shall be glad to know whether you agree about this. I told Dorman-Smith that much would depend on the political settlement with India and Burma, and I do not think we can make any progress with the idea now.

9. Our relations with the Government of Ceylon are still bad, and Aney is to present on our behalf a mild protest against the treatment of Indian traders in the island, who, according to their own account, are gradually being squeezed out of business. I believe a good many of them behaved badly during the air raids and ran away to India. The Ceylon Government have set up co-operative shops which now do a good part of the retail business in essential supplies such as cloth, pulses, kerosene, &c., and this has hit the Indian traders hard. I hope you will be able to let me have the papers about the Ceylon constitution for which I asked in my telegram No. 1348–S of 5th July. Khare is suspicious about the intentions both of His Majesty's Government and of the Ceylon Government, and, as always, the treatment of Indians overseas is a subject on which all parties are united.

I had another telegram from Layton a few days ago about rubber tappers. He said that the Governor and War Council in Ceylon would like us to recruit 10,000 of them in India but must insist on their compulsory repatriation after three years. I doubt if I can get Council to look at this, but I am making enquiries about the rubber tappers said to be available in South India. The Indian case seems to be that they originally worked in Ceylon and had some right to be domiciled there. It was contended when the matter was discussed in Council before that if there was to be compulsory repatriation, we should be reverting to something like the old indentured labour system. I am not sure

that this is true. If the men are prepared to go on the terms offered (which include the right to return to India at any time), I am not clear why we should stop them. I hope to discuss all this with Khare within the next few days; if the case goes to Council the decision will probably be based on sentiment rather than on the merits. But as I cabled to you, if this rubber is really so essential to the United Nations war effort, we must be told so clearly on the highest authority, and pressure must be brought on Ceylon to be reasonable, not merely on India.

[Para. 10, on smuggling in Baluchistan, omitted.]

11. Mudie has just assumed charge as Home Member after a few weeks leave in Kashmir. Thorne has reverted to his appointment of Secretary to the Governor-General (Public).

Dalal assumes charge in Bombay on the 1st August and is expected in New Delhi on the 4th. I am appointing Hutton to officiate as Secretary in Dalal's new department. I hope that Dalal may in the end agree to keep him on, but he told me when I saw him some time ago that he wanted an Indian member of the Indian Civil Service if he could find a suitable man.

12. The National Defence Council meets on 27th, 28th and 29th July, and as I told you last week, I expect to go on tour to Imphal and Kohima early in August, probably on the 5th.

I have a Governors' Conference fixed for 29th, 30th and 31st August.

I have just received your letter of 20th July,[20] and will comment on it in my next letter.

[20] No. 594.

608

Sir T. Rutherford (Bihar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/179: f 120

D.O. No. 598 GB. *27 July 1944*

3. *Politics at Patna and Gaya.* I made some endeavour to find out how informed public opinion is reacting to the Gandhi 7 points (with subsequent glosses) and the proposals to Jinnah. Among the Hindus, even ones with relations in the Army, it is obvious that great suspicion of H.M.G.'s intentions continues together with disappointment that qualified independence with full provincial autonomy (subject to the province joining a central federation for such purposes as army, posts and telegraphs, customs, foreign relations) is not categorically promised without insistence on agreement of parties. Most people seem to think that, faced with the necessity, some compromise will be brought

about; otherwise Britain should draw up a constitution and deliver it as an ultimatum. Muslims not belonging to the Muslim League seem to be at a loss. One of them, who says he is quite content with British rule, thinks that Jinnah really wants to maintain the British in the country as a sort of umpire, while an intelligent Congress Mussalman thought that, while a Federated India should be free from control of [the] Secretary of State, there should be a Governor-General, whether British or Indian, who during the first five years should have discretionary powers to overrule his Cabinet. My impression is that what is most disliked is the distant control of the Secretary of State and of Parliament and that a Viceroy or Governor-General on the lines of the Governor-General in the Australian Commonwealth but with more *personal* power of intervention in the Central Government's affairs, would almost be welcomed.

609

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: ff 225–6

IMPORTANT INDIA OFFICE, *28 July 1944, 10.50 pm*

16756. Your telegram No. 1450–S[1] d[ated] 26th July. I have thought it better not overtly to raise the issue whether the responsibility for Gandhi meeting you or Working Committee is with your Executive. So far as that affects peace and order of India it is comparable to question of internment or release and consequently in domain of Council. On other hand in so far as it is a question of constitutional changes it is strictly speaking outside the field of your Council and it may be desirable for you to retain entire discretion and avoid possible embarrassment.

Similar question arises on point 3. It might be embarrassing, at any rate at this stage, if your Council as such propounded a constitutional solution unacceptable to yourself or H.M.G. Moreover, judging by Linlithgow's experience two years ago,[2] discussion of problem by Council as such might create serious divergences within Council. There is of course no objection in principle if Members in their individual capacity wish to stimulate the study of possible constitutional solutions or put up some plan or plans of their own for your consideration.

I doubt the desirability of mentioning Mahasabha in so many words but am making it clear that Gandhi's proposals might not be acceptable to Hindu opinion even if they are acceptable to the Muslim League.

[1] No. 600. [2] See Vol. II, Nos. 666 and 672, paras. 7 and 8 and Vol. III, No. 298.

610

Mr Winant to Mr Eden

L/P&S/12/4629: f 236

SECRET

EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 1, GROSVENOR SQUARE, LONDON, W.1, *29 July 1944*

Dear Mr Eden,

The State Department has informed me that the publication of Mr William Phillips' letter or the delivery of a copy to anyone outside of the White House or the Department was entirely unauthorized. Furthermore the Embassy was informed that publication of the letter is a matter of great regret to my Government and that the incident is being thoroughly investigated.[1]

Sincerely,

JOHN G. WINANT

[1] In a letter of 5 August, Mr Eden thanked Mr Winant for his letter. In tel. 4075 of 29 July, Sir R. Campbell informed Mr Eden of a meeting on 27 July in which Mr A. A. Berle expressed the sincere regret of the United States Government over the publication of Mr Phillips' report to the President. Sir R. Campbell noted that Mr Berle made no suggestion that the published version of the report was not authentic. Sir R. Campbell felt there was little doubt that it was authentic. L/P&S/12/4629: ff 237, 253.

611

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/E/9/1525: f 736

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *31 July 1944, 9.30 pm*
Received: 31 July, 10.30 pm

1481–S. Your telegram No. 16562[1] of 27th July and Turnbull's letter to Jenkins of 20th July.[2] Future World Organisation and discussions in Washington. Turnbull mentions India's status and this should be taken up now. Apart from considerations of prestige, practical need for contribution by India of forces for the maintenance of security necessitates her inclusion on the same basis as the Dominions, especially if system of regional security is adopted. India is focal point for security in Southern Asia and Indian Ocean region. India is at least as important to the peace of Asia as China and may emerge from the war a stronger power. With China included as one of the four great powers India could not be refused the same status as the Dominions.

[1] No. 601; the date should be 26 July. [2] Not printed.

2. Suggest you give Bajpai some background on these points and assure him that the question of India's status is being examined. Please repeat any telegram to me.[3]

[3] In tel. 17221 of 5 August, Mr Amery informed Sir G. S. Bajpai of the arrangements made for him in the Washington discussions, as set out in No. 601, para. 2, and stated that he would be sent shortly further background information, in particular on India's status in future world organisation. L/E/9/1525: f 703.

Mr Amery minuted on a copy of this tel. on L/P&S/12/2636: 'A good argument for strengthening Bajpai's position.'

612

Note by the Nawab of Bhopal (Extract)

Wavell Papers. Official Correspondence: India, October 1943–December 1944, pp 322, 324–5

SECRET

WHAT HIS HIGHNESS THE NAWAB RULER OF BHOPAL SAID TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE VICEROY IN THE COURSE OF HIS INTERVIEW ON 31ST JULY 1944

1. At the outset I emphasized the gratitude of the Princes to His Excellency for what he had said, on the occasion of his first speech as Viceroy to the Indian Legislature.[1] His assurance then given that the Government would stand by those who had stood by the Government had caused relief and gratification among the Princes.

* * *

4. The Princes have stood by the Crown through thick and thin. In doing this, they have brought on themselves the hostility of those elements which have been in opposition to the Crown. If they must now pay the price of their own loyalty to the Crown and if the Government of India cannot help them, they ask that the Government of India should at least refrain from weakening them, politically and in the administrative and economic spheres.

The weakening of the States and the consequent reduction of their status and their power of resistance to outside pressure must render them less able to secure their just claims when the time comes for them to negotiate with a body other than the Crown. They fear that the Crown may not then be willing to help them or may perhaps be unable to help them even with the best will in the world to do so, and that they will be left to their own resources. In these circumstances, the States would ask that their own position should not be weakened and their capacity to make a fair and just bargain for themselves reduced. Also they would like to know what the Crown's policy will be

towards the States so that if they are to be left to their own resources, they may at once take stock of the position before it is too late.

The recent attitude adopted by the Government of India of exerting pressure on and increasing their control over the States will have most damaging consequences for the latter for we may be sure that a National Government in India will "better the instruction" and attempt to improve on any examples now set by the Government of India in the matter of extending pressure on and control over the States.

[1] See No. 399, note 1.

613

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *1 August 1944, 1.40 pm*
SECRET *Received: 1 August, 8.30 pm*

No. 1491–S. My two immediately succeeding telegrams contain text of Gandhi's letter of July 27th to me and draft reply. I should like decision on draft reply by August 4th if possible as I am on tour from 5th and should like reply to reach Gandhi before he sees Jinnah.

2. I consider reply must go beyond blank refusal of Gandhi's proposal and give impression that His Majesty's Government are receptive and anxious to promote a settlement. The only paragraph in my draft likely to give difficulty is paragraph 4. Indian opinion regards Cripps offer as falling into two parts: (1) post-war arrangements for framing new Constitution, and (2) proposals for interim government. It is necessary to use form of words which does not (repeat not) exclude (1) as an independent undertaking. Opening words of my paragraph 4 are intended to cover this point. But paragraph is drafted to deal mainly with (2) as I am replying to Gandhi's proposal for "National Government". After describing form of transitional government that His Majesty's Government would accept, I point out that agreement on general basis of new Constitution and method of framing it would be necessary to success. It has never been publicly stated that agreement of this kind was essential condition to interim government of Cripps type though contrary opinion was expressed at India Committee meetings[1] I attended in London and is suggested in paragraph 2 of your telegram No. 15722[2] of July 14th. I have attempted in draft to cover the point without stating it as a new condition and think this important.

[1] See Nos. 120, 152, and 159. [2] No. 582; the date should be 15 July.

3. I still believe Gandhi's main objects are: (1) release of Working Committee, and (2) transfer of real power to Congress. Main value of reply is therefore likely to be effect on moderate opinion here and on opinion at home and in U.S.A.

614

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *1 August 1944, 9.30 pm*
SECRET *Received: 1 August, 5.45 pm*

No. 1492–S. Following is text of Gandhi's letter of July 27th:—

Begins. I must admit my disappointment over your letter of 22nd instant.[1] But I am used to work in the face of disappointment. Here is my concrete proposal. I am prepared to advise the Working Committee to declare that in view of changed conditions mass Civil Disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered and that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by the Congress, if a declaration of immediate Indian Independence is made and a National Government responsible to the Central Assembly be formed subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war, the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India. If there is a desire on the part of the British Government for a settlement, friendly talks should take the place of correspondence. But I am in your hands. I shall continue to knock so long as there is the least hope of an honourable settlement. After the foregoing was written I saw Lord Munster's speech[2] in the House of Lords. The summary given by him to the House of Lords fairly represents my proposal. This summary may serve as a basis for mutual friendly discussion. *Ends.*

[1] No. 597. [2] See No. 607, note 14.

615

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *1 August 1944, 11.53 pm*
SECRET *Received: 1 August, 11.45 pm*

No. 1493–S. Following is text of draft reply to Gandhi:—

Begins. Thank you for your letter of 27th July. Your proposal is—

(*i*) that you should undertake to advise the Working Committee (*a*)

"that in view of changed conditions mass Civil Disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered", and (*b*) "that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by Congress" provided—

(*ii*) that His Majesty's Government should (*a*) declare immediate Indian Independence, and (*b*) form a "National Government" responsible to the Central Assembly, "subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India".

2. Since your letter was written you must have studied the statement made by Mr Amery in the House of Commons on 28th July,[1] and will know that this proposal is not acceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis for discussion. It is very similar to the proposal made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942,[2] and His Majesty's Government's reasons for rejecting it are the same as they were then.

3. Although His Majesty's Government cannot accept your present proposal, and I do not think that we should make progress if we met in order to discuss it, I must assure you that they are most anxious for a settlement of the Indian problem. The war is now moving fast, and unless we can reach agreement on lines satisfactory to all parties, India can hardly take her proper place at the Peace Conference, and our plans for post-war economic and social development will be hampered.

4. I do not wish to prejudge any proposals that may later be made to me, but if the leaders of the Hindus, Muslims and other important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government which would be established and would work within the framework of the present Constitution without modification by convention or otherwise, I believe we could make progress. It is quite clear that until the war is over the responsibility for Defence and Military operations cannot be separated from the other responsibilities of Government and that until the new Constitution takes shape His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. If the transitional government is to succeed there must, I think, be agreement before it is formed between Hindus and Muslims and the other important minorities as to the general basis of the new Constitution and as to the method by which it should be framed. This agreement seems to me a matter primarily for the Indian leaders. I should be glad to help them to achieve it if I thought I could do anything to help; but I doubt if I can do anything until they have come closer together than they are now. I beg you to remember

[1] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 402, cols. 1104–21.

[2] See Maulana Azad's correspondence with Sir S. Cripps, Vol. I, Nos. 587 and 604.

that minority problems are not easy. They exist in many countries and have caused much unhappiness and even civil war. It is a mistake to say that the minority problems in India have been created by the British; they are real and can be solved only by patience and generosity. The period after the war is over for which the transitional government would last would depend on the speed with which the new Constitution could be framed. I see no reason why work on the Constitution should not begin as soon as the transitional government takes office, and if the parties had arrived at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing it, I do not think the period need be very long.

5. You and Mr Jinnah have my good wishes for your approaching discussion. *Ends.*

616

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/P&J/8/519: f 87

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *1 August 1944*

D.O. No. F. 50 (12)–GG/43

My dear Amery,

Thank you for your telegram 16756[1] of 28th July on certain points arising out of your speech during the debate. I should have to consult my Executive Council before deciding either to see Gandhi or to let Gandhi see the Working Committee. Both these steps would have an important bearing on peace and order. I agree that any proposals for constitutional change would be for the Governor-General and not for Council and that the Governor-General must retain discretion to deal with such proposals himself. I should however keep Council informed before any decisions were announced.

2. I agree that Council cannot collectively produce a constructive plan and I doubt whether individual members can do so. I have indeed discouraged publication of views by Members.

3. I note your opinion about the Mahasabha which presumably applies to Sikhs also.

Yours,

WAVELL

[1] No. 609.

617

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *1 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 20th July[1] which arrived just before my last letter was sent off.

2. There is little change in the food situation, which means that we are as anxious as ever, and in as precarious a position. I did not mention in my last letter the meeting of the Food Advisory Council, which took place on 26th July. Srivastava circulated a comprehensive memorandum, and made a speech, in which he was reported as saying that if India did not receive 1½ million tons of imported foodgrains he would not be responsible for the food situation. I am told that he did not actually say this, but it is quite likely that he went a little further than he intended. The proceedings of the Council had a rather cool reception in the Press, but I think people generally are beginning to realise that the Food Department is doing quite well in very difficult conditions, and criticism is less unbalanced than it was.

Woodhead has settled down to work and held his first Press Conference on 31st July. He and his colleagues have decided to hear all evidence *in camera*. He spoke to me about this in Simla, and I am sure the decision is right. There has been a good deal of ill-feeling between Provinces, and between Provinces and the Centre, about the food problem, and it would be most embarrassing if officials were examined in public. There is also the certainty that if non-official evidence were published in the Press witnesses would come forward merely to denounce the Bengal and Orissa Ministries, and to air their political views. There will probably be protests against the decision, but I am sure Woodhead will not depart from it. He has arranged with the Political Department for an enquiry to be made about a visit by the Commission to Travancore and Cochin.

I am glad you agreed[2] to modify the announcement about French's visit. It would have been better, I think, to make no announcement at all, but the wording finally approved will do no harm.

I am sorry that you could not make a more positive statement about food imports during the debate[3] in the House of Commons.

3. Your debate seems to have gone very well, and to have been conducted with admirable restraint and goodwill. It has had an unfavourable Press here,

[1] No. 594. [2] In tel. 16760 of 28 July. L/E/8/3358.
[3] *Parl. Debs.*, 5th ser., H. of C., vol. 402, 28 July 1944, cols. 1013–1121.

but this was inevitable. I have just received a further letter from Gandhi, in which he states very briefly as his constructive proposal his plan for a National Government. He wrote on the 27th July, and had seen the report of the debate[4] in the Lords. The debate in the House of Commons, during which you gave His Majesty's Government's views on the National Government plan, took place the next day, and Gandhi must know that it is unacceptable. I will telegraph to you the text of his letter[5] and the draft of the reply[6] I propose to send to him. I do not think he has moved at all from his original position, and his intention is to secure the release of the Working Committee, and, if he can, the transfer of power to him or to the Congress. The reply will need very careful thought. Judging by the Press reactions at home to the debate, public opinion may be a little ahead of His Majesty's Government, and we should not say anything to make it appear that our attitude is wholly negative.

Jinnah's handling of the Rajagopalachari proposals came as something of a surprise. I thought he would go for outright rejection if he felt strong enough to do so. On the other hand, he must be concerned for the solidarity of the League, and if disagreement seemed likely and he felt that he could not face a further purge, he might agree to negotiations of a kind not likely to be successful. What he did was to announce that he had agreed to meet Gandhi, and to make a speech tearing the Rajagopalachari proposals to bits. He added some sentimental observations about Pakistan, and ended by inviting the prayers and good wishes of his colleagues for the successful outcome of his meeting with Gandhi. Whether he means business or not I do not know; it is possible that he may attempt some temporary alliance with the Congress to embarrass the British Government, but on the real issue he will be in as great a difficulty as Gandhi with his own followers. For example, he would, I imagine, have to claim half the portfolios in the National Government for the Muslim League, and I do not see how Gandhi could possibly agree to this. The meeting may take place on any date from 9th August onwards, and I ought, I think, to reply to Gandhi before he sees Jinnah.

4. There is no change in Provincial politics. Casey sent me a long letter[7] the other day in which he came to the conclusion that on grounds of efficiency we ought to move into a Section 93 administration in Bengal. The time to do this was last January when I recommended it,[8] and Casey took the opposite view. Things are very much better in Bengal than they were seven months ago, and unless there is an obvious breakdown of the Parliamentary system it will be difficult to justify Section 93. I am to discuss Casey's letter with him on 5th August when I shall be in Calcutta for one night on my way to Assam.

Jinnah seems to have brought about a settlement between the warring Muslims in Sind, so I suppose the Ministry, which survived the last Assembly session with ease, is now secure for some little time.

5. I told you in my last letter[9] that I was to have a talk with His Highness the Chancellor about the subjects to be dealt with by his deputation of Princes. I saw him on 31st July.[10] Some of the subjects to be brought up are relatively unimportant—for example, the protection of the States from political agitation based on the British Indian Provinces, and the wording of the arbitration rules. The main subjects will be the attachment scheme, guarantees for the preservation of relations between States and the Crown Representative and the anxiety of the States about their industrial development. I heard what His Highness had to say, and he wants me to see the deputation on 15th and 16th September. I have not, of course, committed myself in any way.

6. I have been looking into our arrangements for inward censorship, as I thought, from reports passing between the Information and Broadcasting Department and the India Office, that we were being unnecessarily severe. There is not much point in stopping messages which are bound to be received in India when the papers and magazines in which they originally appeared arrive by mail, and which are on the same lines as articles published freely in the Indian Press. I found it impossible to lay down any rigid rules, but I have issued instructions that the censorship must be intelligently applied. A Drew Pearson message[11] was referred to me a few days ago, which dealt with the alleged dispute between the President and the Prime Minister about Indian affairs, quoted from a report from Phillips, and cast doubts on the reliability of the Indian Army. The tone of the message was so bad that I agreed to its being stopped. I understand that Bajpai was asked by the External Affairs Department to make enquiries, and that Campbell has seen Cordell Hull,[12] who said he disapproved of the message and that there might have been some leakage from the State Department. Merrell has just spoken to Caroe and has confirmed that there was an unauthorised leak from the State Department, and that the comments attributed to Phillips were genuine. He said he hoped we had stopped the message, which I had already done. It seems to me that inward censorship must, in a sense, be political, for it is necessary to stop the grosser kinds of American comment, which are intended mainly for election purposes in the United States, but may have a very bad effect on feeling and morale here.

7. I am sorry that both the industrialists and the scientists have decided to postpone their visits to the United Kingdom. I have no doubt that things are uncomfortable there and that travelling may be difficult. At the same time there is a risk that interest in the objects of these visits may die down, and that, in the end, the parties may not go at all.

[4] See No. 600, note 2. [5] No. 614. [6] No. 615. [7] Dated 24 July 1944. L/P&J/8/652.
[8] See Nos. 301 and 311. [9] No. 607, para. 7.
[10] See No. 612 for an extract from the Nawab of Bhopal's note of his remarks in this interview.
[11] See No. 603. [12] See No. 602.

8. I have just replied[13] to your official telegram[14] about gold sales. I have not sent a separate reply to your private telegram[15] on the same subject. We can only accept the position, but the inability of His Majesty's Government to continue to supply gold will have a serious effect on the problem of inflation, and will, I fear, affect our decision on the extent to which we can meet the demands of the Central Provision Office in 1944 and 1945.

[Para. 9, on rubber tappers for Ceylon, omitted.]

10. The National Defence Council duly met on 27th, 28th and 29th July. Giffard gave an excellent review of the fighting in Arakan, Assam and North Burma, and relieved what was otherwise a dull session. I still think the Council useful. Members waste a good deal of time on points of detail, but some of their suggestions are valuable, and the meetings clear up a good many misunderstandings. During this session Sultan Ahmed made a statement on the reorganisation of the National War Front, and the discussion showed that there was considerable heat in Bombay about Baig's appointment as Central Organiser and some rather injudicious statements he seems to have made, or authorised, in the Press, before he assumed charge. The National War Front was organised on a Provincial basis, and the Provincial leaders, some of whom are non-officials, dislike dictation from the Centre. Baig told me that he intended to hold a Conference of Provincial leaders, and I have no doubt he will be able to smooth things over.

11. Have you yet reached any decision about the extension of the jurisdiction of the Federal Court? I wrote to you about this in my letter No. F.–260–G.G./41[16] dated 28th May 1944.

12. You will remember Hill's proposal for an all-India Medical Centre. It has been discussed in some detail in the Education, Health and Lands Department, who referred it to the Bhore Committee. The Committee, with one dissentient, agreed that the idea was a good one, but asked the Government of India to refrain from making any decisions until the Committee's final report, which would include a considered recommendation, had been submitted. Jogendra Singh has accepted the Committee's advice, and we therefore cannot undertake detailed planning for the present. But Hance, the D.G., I.M.S., who is in any case going to the United Kingdom for consultation with your Medical Adviser, is being instructed to take an expert on research with him and to visit various institutions in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A. and get what advice he can. He will have to be away from India rather longer than was originally intended, but I think the idea is sound, and if Hance, with his knowledge of Indian conditions, can see some of the best teaching institutions in the United Kingdom and the U.S.A., he should be able to help a great deal when planning begins.

13. In your telegram No. 619[17] of 19th July you asked for my views on Spens' memorandum on Judicial reform. It is being examined by the Departments concerned, and as it covers a wide field I do not think they will be able to comment immediately. I will write as soon as I can.

14. I send by this bag a copy of a military report about the services of the Nagas in Assam.[18] I hope to see and congratulate the Naga Chiefs at Kohima on my next tour. The staunchness of the Nagas shows that there was not much wrong with our system of administration, and that the British officers in the tribal areas had won their confidence. I think some publicity on the conduct of the Nagas should be arranged, and I have given instructions for this, as soon as the General Staff think it can do no harm. The India Office might follow suit in due course.

[Para. 15, on an appeal by an officer retired from the Indian Army; para. 16, on informing Governors of the conditions on which they might retain correspondence when leaving office; and para. 17, on an opening for Dr C. L. Katial in India, omitted.]

18. I am off to Assam on the morning of 5th August and return on the afternoon of the 9th. The preparations for the Governors' Conference at the end of the month are fairly well advanced, and I will have copies of the memoranda and the proceedings sent to you in print.

[13] In tel. 1470–S of 29 July. L/F/7/1234.
[14] 15405 of 11 July informing Lord Wavell of H.M.G.'s decision to discontinue the supply of gold intended for anti-inflationary sales. L/F/7/1233.
[15] 599 of 11 July. L/PO/10/18. [16] L/P&J/8/458. [17] L/P&J/8/463.
[18] L/PO/4/24: ff 317–19.

618

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *1 August 1944*
Received: 10 August

The India Debate,[1] which was to have been today, was put back to last Friday at somewhat short notice and kept me so busy that I sent you no letter last Thursday. As for the Debate itself, it was, from the Parliamentary point of view, one of the most useful we have yet had. The House generally is now much more interested in Indian reconstruction than in attempting to force the pace on the political side, although no one goes so far as to suggest that the

[1] See No. 617, note 3.

political issue can be sidetracked by the economic. All the speeches were moderate and responsible in tone and, except possibly Sorensen, no one really suggested that Gandhi's move had carried things very far; at any rate in any direction which would enable you to see him and discuss the formation of a provisional Government. Nor was the release of the Congress detenus pressed on me, except as something that should be kept in mind now as becoming eventually necessary. Not uninteresting, too, was a vigorous speech by Montague, a Labour Member, against Labour identifying Congress capitalism with its own aims. It looks as if he had been talking to the Indian Federation of Labour delegates, with whom, by the way, I had a long talk some time ago and to whom Bryddie gave tea yesterday.

2. My own speech in winding up suffered as a purely debating speech from the necessity of having to explain in full all that is being done over food, both in Bengal and centrally, and also of having to give some idea of what is being planned in the way of reconstruction, so as not to create the impression that the Bombay industrialists are the only people who are thinking in bold terms. For the rest, I don't think I can have embarrassed you over the restatement of the Cripps Offer, or over the question whether your seeing Gandhi or not should be a matter for your Council or for your own judgement. As I put it to you in my telegram,[2] it is obviously within the sphere of your Council in so far as it affects Law and Order in India, but outside the sphere of the Council in so far as it may be a discussion on the future Constitution of India.

3. The above may seem to be a somewhat pedantic technical division and personally I should have no objection in principle to your throwing open the field of constitutional change for discussion by your Council to any extent. After all, if we base ourselves on the principle that Indians should devise their own Constitution, there is no reason why Indians, representative in the broader sense of the term, and in contact with actual administration, should not make their contribution. The only objection is the more practical one, of which you can be the best judge, how far such a discussion might create cleavages within your Council and, if so, lead also to active backdoor communication between individual members and those friends of theirs, Hindu or Muslim, with whom they may want to keep in touch. Linlithgow's experience two years ago[3] when discussing the future of Provincial Government, led him to fear that he was getting a bit near the danger line. I found a bit of the same when Firoz told me that he and his fellow Muslims were afraid of complete Indianisation of the Council lest it should leave the Muslims in a minority with no one to support them. That would not, of course, preclude your giving Finance to an Indian and some other Department to a European. Nor is it in itself an insuperable objection, so long as your reserve powers are intact and you can veto any discussion which would precipitate trouble.

4. What was not uninteresting in the Debate was a growing feeling, strongly voiced by Schuster, that there is no interim solution possible pending real agreement upon a final Constitution. More than that, a growing feeling that, if such a final Constitution shows little signs of coming about after the war, we should take our courage in our hands and impose our own Constitution. This, no doubt, would be for a minimum term of years, within which they could find a better one for themselves, or carry on. That is not very far really from Firoz's plan, which he now wisely thinks it better not to publish for the present, but to wait for a more favourable moment.

5. In that connection I have sometimes wondered whether, once Germany has been defeated and Japan pushed well away from the Indian frontier, it might not be possible to have elections and put the 1935 Constitution into effect for a very limited period, say five years, subject to the following necessary alterations. Firstly, that the minimum number of Princes whose adhesion was required under the 1935 Act should be dropped, in which case I imagine practically all the Princes would keep a waiting attitude and do nothing. Secondly, that our undertaking to the Muslim majority provinces to stand outside is definitely reaffirmed and your power to intervene at your own discretion to stop any measures calculated to interfere with that right preserved. Thirdly, that your Instructions, and those of Provincial Governors, should definitely require you to form your Executive as a coalition of the different elements, and, once formed, to give them your confidence, so far at any rate as adverse Parliamentary votes are concerned, as long as the Legislature is in being.

6. Something of that sort might be easier than going as far as Coupland or Firoz do in attempting a major sub-division of India, but it would not of course give quite the same assurance to the Muslims and, if at all acceptable, would have to be for a shorter period. The great advantage of it would be that it would require a minimum of legislation here and, if imposed for a sufficiently short period, leave the maximum of freedom to Indians to find their own solution, and the maximum of stimulus to their getting ahead with it.

7. One point that I have raised in correspondence with Linlithgow from the very first week, almost, and that I have more than once discussed with you,[4] was ventilated again by Stanley Reed in the Debate. That is, the desirability of producing at any rate all the factual material available on other Constitutions for the use of any Indian Conference, whether informal or formal, leading up to a Convention. There has always been the difficulty of finding any commission or committee which should be regarded as reasonably

[2] No. 609. [3] See Vol. II, Nos. 666 and 672, paras. 7 and 8 and Vol. III, No. 298.
[4] Cf. No. 334, para. 5.

impartial. But I wonder whether, if the material were actually produced and seen to be purely factual, it would not in fact be freely made use of? Suppose, for instance, that the India Office set up such an enquiry without any publicity and produced its results a year or two hence? That might conceivably be easier to keep quiet than any enquiry started under the auspices of your Council. I wonder what you would say to that?

2 August

8. I did not mention your first exchange of letters[5] with Gandhi in the Debate, because I was afraid that Members might ask me to read the letters out and I already had as much hay on my fork as I could manage. Indeed, I had to cut out a good deal of what I had meant to say about India's munitions and supplies effort generally. Since then, Gandhi's further letter[6] and your proposed reply[7] have reached me. The matter is of sufficient importance, I think, for me to submit it to the Cabinet tomorrow, but that ought still to leave you time to get a reply before you leave. There are two or three minor suggestions I am proposing to make, if the Cabinet approve, the most important perhaps being an inclusion of some reference to the Treaty to be made between His Majesty's Government and India at the same time as the new Constitution comes into force. Inserting it where I have suggested makes it clear that we do not mean to make the Treaty a cause of unnecessary delay. I have also suggested leaving out the word "patience" in one place and substituting "mutual compromise" lest Indian opinion should at once fasten on the word as implying that we wish Indians to exercise indefinite patience. I may be able to let you have the result of the Cabinet's decision on this, as also on Bajpai, before this letter goes off.

9. You may like to know about an interesting idea which Bevin has brought forward. A few days ago he had a discussion with the High Commissioner, at which Baxter represented my Office, about the possibility of bringing trainees from India to this country to attend a training centre for mechanisation in coal mines which the Ministry of Labour have inaugurated here. This centre gives instruction in the use and maintenance of the complicated machinery which is now being installed in coal mines here. It has not been found necessary to select for training people with previous engineering knowledge and Bevin's idea was that Indian trainees suitably selected could be expected to find the training of great value. The upshot of the discussion, however, was that the most satisfactory arrangement would probably be not to send over parties of trainees from India, but to set up a training centre in India itself. Bevin undertook to arrange for the necessary specifications and drawings of plant and machinery to be made available at an early date and to do his best to see that two suitable experts should be made available to go out to India to get the scheme going and train the instructional staff there. Baxter pointed out that in some ways

the problem to be solved in India might be more difficult than in this country, since the type of personnel ordinarily employed underground in Indian mines is not such as to be likely to throw up from its ranks suitable candidates for this kind of skilled work. Bevin suggested that it was desirable to depict these opportunities in India as being in effect the inauguration of a new profession. The High Commissioner will be communicating with the Government of India about this, but I thought I would let you know of this interesting suggestion. It occurs to me that this might provide a useful opening for some of the returned soldiers who have acquired some experience of tanks or other machinery.

3 August

10. I would certainly think, as you suggest in paragraph 6 of your letter of July 19th,[8] that it would be a very good thing to come to some sort of agreement with Australia providing you can find a useful list of subjects to be covered in the Agreement. I don't think it would be desirable to open the question of Indian settlement in North-Western Australia. I don't think Australians would look at it, and if they did it would open the door to all the kind of unpleasantnesses we have already had over South Africa.

11. In that connection I will bring Khare's demand for legislation, allowing franchise reprisals, before the Cabinet and will see whether they can agree to the kind of answer that would help him.

12. As regards the Pilgrimage I have returned to the charge with Alexander,[9] but haven't very much hope that he will reconsider the position.

PS.—Winston insisted on your draft being considered by the India Committee who largely redrafted it. When it came up to the Cabinet this evening he stormed incoherently for an hour or more and in the end it has to come up for further revision tomorrow and then back to the Cabinet later in the day, so that it won't reach you before you have left Delhi.[10] I am sorry for the inconvenience you may be caused. I hope you are sorry for your poor S. of S.!

5 Nos. 584 and 597. 6 See No. 614. 7 See No. 615. 8 No. 593.
9 In a letter dated 1 August. L/P&J/8/762.
10 In tel. 17169 of 3 August, Mr Amery informed Lord Wavell that it was impossible to secure Cabinet agreement on the reply to Mr Gandhi's letter that day but he hoped to secure agreement on 4 August. L/P&J/8/519.

619

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/247: ff 55–6

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *2 August 1944*

No. 521

Mr Jinnah has returned to the Punjab from Kashmir. He stayed for a short time in Rawalpindi and he and his supporters are now busy in holding their All-India Muslim League Meeting in Lahore. Various offensive resolutions have been passed against the Unionists and those who are held to be upholding the Premier and his friends. Jinnah has also been unnecessarily offensive in his response to the Congress advances and has done very little to improve whatever chances there were of a compromise. There is a fairly general feeling of regret amongst responsible Muslims at the breach which has occurred between the Unionists and the Leaguers, but there seems at present little prospect of the Leaguers making any serious attempt to patch up the split for which they have been responsible. Khizar and his colleagues have been touring in several districts in the Province and have produced a distinct effect on their audiences. From an account given me by a disinterested eye-witness the meeting recently held by Khizar at Lyallpur was a most remarkable success. The Unionists have also succeeded in collecting large sums for the Zamindars League. The Muslim Leaguers show signs of perturbation at this and have been bringing forward wild accusations of official pressure and misuse of the National War Front. Muslim Leaguers have been exhibiting an increased tendency to make use of mosques for propaganda purposes. It is not unlikely that their opponents will retaliate by taking similar action. Khizar is decidedly more optimistic than he was, but he realises that there is much hard work for the Unionists to do if they are to hold their own.

The Hindu Press is still mainly engaged in expounding the reasonableness of Mr Gandhi's explanations of his past attitude, but opinion is divided about the Congress approach to Mr Jinnah and there is strong opposition in many Hindu quarters to any form of encouragement of Pakistan. Amongst Sikhs Congress advances to the Muslim League have tended to meet with general disapproval and there have been loud complaints that Gandhi in spite of his promises has ignored the Sikh community. Master Tara Singh continues to threaten an attack on the Kapurthala State,[1] but it seems doubtful whether he can work up any appreciable support for this venture. Giani Kartar Singh is manœuvring to take Master Tara Singh's place, but has met with a good deal of opposition. His attention is still concentrated largely on the Gurdwaras Amendment Bill. When this battle is over it seems not unlikely that he will do his best to

undermine Sardar Baldev Singh, who is, the Giani seems to consider, becoming unduly independent.

[1] See No. 516, para. 5.

620

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 426

L/P&J/8/519: ff 176–7

India

Viceroy's Proposed Reply to Gandhi

INDIA OFFICE, *2 August 1944*

I circulate telegrams received from the Viceroy about his recent correspondence with Gandhi. Lord Wavell proposes to send the reply given in Appendix IV to Gandhi's last letter (Appendix III) and asks for approval by the 4th August. I think that the Viceroy's proposed reply is generally suitable both in tone and substance, but I would propose to suggest that the wording be modified in certain respects. I attach (Appendix V) the reply which, if my colleagues agree, I would propose to send.

The important points which these proposed alterations seek to emphasise are—

(1) That any interim provisional Government must be within the framework of the existing Constitution.

(2) That any such interim Government must continue until such time after the end of hostilities as a new Constitution comes into operation, and Treaty arrangements between India and this country have been concluded as contemplated in the Declaration of March 1942.[1]

L. S. A.

Appendix I to No. 620

TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY, DATED 26TH JULY

1449–S.

[*See No. 597, note 1.*]

Appendix II to No. 620

TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 1ST AUGUST

1491–S.

[*There follows the decipher of No. 613.*]

[1] Vol. I, No. 456.

Appendix III to No. 620

TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 1ST AUGUST

1492–S.
[*There follows the decipher of No. 614.*]

Appendix IV to No. 620

TELEGRAM FROM VICEROY TO SECRETARY OF STATE, DATED 1ST AUGUST

1493–S.
[*There follows the decipher of No. 615.*]

Appendix V to No. 620

DRAFT TELEGRAM FROM SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA TO VICEROY

1. Your telegrams 1491–S and 1493–S have been considered in Cabinet. His Majesty's Government agree with your proposed reply subject to following amendments:—

(*a*) Paragraph 3, first sentence. After "although" substitute "I cannot regard your present proposal as one that I could recommend for the acceptance of His Majesty's Government and indeed I do not think we should make progress by meeting for discussion on that basis, I must . . . . &c." Object is to avoid any suggestion of difference of view between yourself and His Majesty's Government and in order not to appear to rule out meeting and personal discussion, but only meeting on basis of *present* proposal.

(*b*) Paragraph 3, second sentence. After "hardly" substitute "play her proper part in the post-war settlement, and our plans . . . . &c." It is not certain yet whether or when there will be a Peace Conference, but it is certain that there will be many matters requiring settlement in which India should take part.

(*c*) Paragraph 4. Omit words "without modification by convention or otherwise" in first sentence. There would probably have to be modification in sense that official members of Council except Commander-in-Chief would disappear, and I would hesitate to say at this stage that there could be no conventional changes at all. What we cannot contemplate is a written or agreed convention which would in fact be not a convention but a modification of the Act.

(*d*) Second sentence. Before "new constitution" insert "hostilities cease and the."

(*e*) Second sentence. For "takes shape" substitute "is in operation."

(*f*) Eighth sentence. For "patience and generosity" substitute "mutual compromise and generosity." The word patience might suggest a desire for delay on our part.
(*g*) Tenth sentence. Insert "preliminary" before "work."
(*h*) Tenth sentence. After "takes office" insert "if not before."
(*i*) Tenth sentence. For "I do not think the period need be very long" substitute "the time taken after the war for coming to final conclusions and for the necessary treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government to be agreed upon need [not] be very long."

621

Mr Amery to Mr Eden

L/E/9/1525: f 726

SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *2 August 1944*

My dear Anthony,
I enclose a copy of a telegram[1] from the Viceroy (together with the telegram[2] to which it refers), about India's status in the future World Organisation.

The point to which Wavell is referring is the conflict between paragraph 20 of Memorandum A,[3] which assumes membership of all United Nations in the proposed World Organisation, and the recognition in paragraph 22 of sovereign equality, on the one hand; and paragraph 1 which limits membership to independent nations, on the other. India is not an independent nation, but she is one of the United Nations, she signed the Treaty of Versailles, and was an original member of the League of Nations in the activities of which she took her full share. As you will recall, the Aga Khan was President of the Assembly

[1] No. 611. [2] No. 601.

[3] This Memorandum, appended to War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 370 dated 3 July 1944, is headed 'Scope and Nature of the Permanent Organisation'. Para. 20 reads:

'*Membership.*—It is assumed that at the outset all the United Nations will be invited to be members of the Organisation. What States now neutral shall be admitted and at what period is a matter for consideration. The enemy States cannot be admitted until they have shown by their conduct that they accept the objects of the organisation and intend to pursue them.'

para. 22 reads:

'*World Assembly.*—The sovereign equality of all members should be recognised by their representatives meeting together on a footing of equality in a World Assembly at least once a year. The right of information and criticism should belong to all members of the organisation.'

and para. 1 reads:

'The World Organisation will consist of independent States freely associated and working together for the better realisation of the common good of mankind.'
R/30/1/4: ff 34, 32.

in 1937. Moreover, under the Cripps proposals India has been offered a status which would unquestionably qualify for membership.

For these reasons, and for the practical considerations referred to by the Viceroy (with whose views I am in entire agreement) I had not considered there to be any doubt but that India should be included as a member. I think, however, that it would be as well if a note on the position were included in the Delegation's instructions.

There is a further point in connection with membership of the Council. If one seat is to be secured for the Dominions as a whole, it is necessary to bear in mind that India, even if she cannot at present qualify to be treated on the same basis, may soon reach the required status and this is perhaps an additional argument for such a claim.

These points are really, I suppose, for the Armistice and Post War Committee in the first instance, but since the Committee may not now have an opportunity of considering them, I am putting them to you now and am sending a copy of this letter to Attlee.

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

622

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 429 (Revise)

L/P&J/8/519: ff 174–5

Viceroy's Proposed Reply to Gandhi

REPORT BY THE INDIA COMMITTEE

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE, S.W.1, *3 August 1944*

The Committee has considered[1] the draft reply to Mr Gandhi proposed in the Viceroy's telegram of 1st August, 1944, (1493–S)[2] printed as Appendix IV to W.P. (44) 426.[3]

They recommend the following redraft of paragraphs 3 to 5 of that telegram:

"3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail I should remind you that H.M.G. at that time made it clear (*a*) that their offer of complete and unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was conditional upon the framing of a Constitution agreed by the main elements of India's national life and the negotiation of the necessary treaty arrangements with H.M.G. (*b*) that it was impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the Constitution by which means alone a "national government" such as you suggest could be made responsible to the Central Assembly.

4. It was upon the above conditions that H.M.G. invited the Indian leaders to take part in an interim government, which would operate under the existing Constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over the responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided out from the other responsibilities of the Government and that until hostilities cease and the new Constitution is in operation, H.M.G. and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between H.M.G. on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing arrangements can only be reopened at the instance of one or other of those governments.

5. Your present proposal is consequently not one which I could recommend for the acceptance of H.M.G. There is therefore no purpose in our meeting for discussion on that basis. At the same time H.M.G. are most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. The war is now moving fast towards a victorious conclusion and unless agreement can be reached on lines satisfactory to all parties India can hardly play her proper part in the post-war settlement or throw her undistracted energies after the war into plans for economic and social development.

6. If the leaders of Hindus, Moslems and the important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe we could make progress. For such a transitional government to succeed there must, before it is formed, be agreement in principle between Hindus and Moslems and the important minorities as to the method by which the new Constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. I should be glad to help them to achieve it if I thought I could do anything to help. But I doubt if I can do anything until the Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now, and I welcome meetings between them such as that which is shortly to take place between you and Mr Jinnah. I beg you to remember that minority problems are not easy. They exist in many countries and have caused much unhappiness and even civil war. It is a mistake to say that minority problems in India have been created by the British; they are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and generosity.

7. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional Government would last would depend on the speed with which the new Constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that Constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian Leaders are prepared to

[1] The Cabinet Office Index states that no minutes of this meeting were issued. R/30/1/4: f 7.
[2] No. 615. [3] No. 620.

co-operate to that end. If they can arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the Constitution, the time taken after the war for coming to final conclusions and for agreeing the necessary treaty arrangements with H.M.G. need not be very long."

The Committee are of opinion that to keep the initiative in our hands this correspondence should be released as soon as Mr Gandhi has received the Viceroy's reply. They recommend that the Viceroy should be so informed and asked to make it clear to Mr. Gandhi in whatever way he thinks fit that immediate publication is proposed.

C. R. A.

623

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 100th Conclusions

Those present at this meeting held in the Cabinet War Room, S.W.1, on 3 August 1944 at 5.30 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Attlee, Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Ernest Bevin, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton, The Earl of Halifax

Also present during discussion of items 2 and 3 were: Viscount Simon, Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Mr A. V. Alexander, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr Hugh Dalton, Lord Leathers, Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell

Minute 2

L/P&S/12/2636: f 27

Indian Minister at Washington

On the 9th June, the War Cabinet had considered[1] a proposal set out in a Joint Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 221)[2] that the Agency-General of the Government of India in Washington should be made into an independent Mission headed by a Minister. It had been decided to postpone consideration of this proposal until Lord Halifax's next visit to this country.[3]

Consideration of this matter was now resumed.

The main argument in favour of this proposal was that a Minister who was head of an independent Mission, instead of being a member of the Embassy staff, would carry more weight as a representative of the Government of India, and that this would be helpful to us in getting a better appreciation in America of the Indian position.

On the other hand, it was argued that if this change was made, reciprocal facilities in India might be asked for with consequences which might be

embarrassing, and that there was no particular advantage to be gained by making the change proposed at the present time.

The War Cabinet—

Agreed that no change should be made at the present time, but that the proposal could, if necessary, be brought up again in six months' time.[4]

Minute 3

L/P&J/8/519: ff 169–72

INDIA

Gandhi

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 90th Conclusions, Minute 4)[5]

3. The War Cabinet had before them—

(i) a memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 426)[6] containing a copy of correspondence with the Viceroy as to the reply to be given to Mr Gandhi's letter of 27th July[7] to Lord Wavell.

(ii) A report (W.P. (44) 429 Revise)[8] by the India Committee containing revised paragraphs which it was suggested should be substituted for paragraphs 3–5 of the draft reply proposed by the Viceroy (Appendix IV to W.P. (44) 426).

The India Committee also recommended that, in order to keep the initiative in our hands, the correspondence should be released as soon as Mr Gandhi had received the Viceroy's reply, and that the Viceroy should be so informed and asked to make it clear to Mr Gandhi in whatever way he thought fit that immediate publication was proposed.

THE PRIME MINISTER expressed grave uneasiness as to the position which had developed. It was most undesirable that the Viceroy should find himself in correspondence with Mr Gandhi or that matters should have taken a turn that could be represented as a renewal of negotiations between Mr Gandhi and The King's representative. Mr Gandhi had consistently been a bitter enemy of this country. The proposals which he had now put forward involved acceptance on our part of "immediate independence" coupled with a readiness to accept a so-called "National Government" for the period of the war. We

1 No. 532. 2 No. 475.

3 On 17 July, Mr Turnbull had written to Sir E. Bridges saying that Mr Amery had seen Lord Halifax who was still strongly in favour of the proposal and did not feel the objections raised in Cabinet discussion outweighed the advantages. Mr Turnbull therefore asked that the proposal be brought up in Cabinet again before Lord Halifax left the U.K.

4 In tel. 17475 of 9 August, the S. of S. informed the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. of this Conclusion.

5 No. 575. 6 No. 620. 7 See No. 614. 8 No. 622.

were to be allowed to continue military operations from India, but on the understanding that no financial burden would fall upon India. Propositions of this nature were quite unacceptable and he was disturbed to think that we should be corresponding with Mr Gandhi regarding them. Was there not the risk of our being misunderstood by the minorities and by Mr Jinnah? Would it not be better that any reply should take the form of an acknowledgement by the Viceroy or his private secretary, to be coupled with a public statement by H.M.G. to which Mr Gandhi would be referred? In any event it was surely essential that a very firm line should be adopted and no risk run of our giving the impression that we were truckling to Mr Gandhi.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that the Viceroy had not consulted him before informing Mr Gandhi, in his letter of 27th July,[9] (W.M. (44) 426, Appendix I) that he would be glad to consider a definite and constructive policy if put forward by him. It was in reply to that letter that Mr Gandhi had put forward his present proposals, and it was impossible, in the Secretary of State's judgement, to avoid a reply being sent to them. It would be difficult, too, for that reply to be sent by anyone but the Viceroy. It was true that Lord Wavell was under instructions not to enter into negotiations with Indian political leaders. But it was equally very difficult for the Viceroy to decline to have any conversations with, or respond to any overtures from, prominent political personages. And there could be no question of Mr. Gandhi's political importance. He agreed that the draft which the Viceroy had proposed was open to exception in certain respects. The revised draft prepared by the India Committee was firm and dignified and he strongly urged its acceptance. The matter was one of urgency, since the Viceroy was to go on tour on 5th August and was anxious to despatch his reply to Mr Gandhi before doing so. Mr Gandhi was likely to meet Mr Jinnah in the course of the next three or four days and Lord Wavell favoured the despatch of his reply to Mr Gandhi before the meeting took place.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL said that the India Committee fully recognised the difficulties of the position to which the Prime Minister had drawn attention. On the other hand, we were faced with a situation in which we could not easily avoid a reply to Mr Gandhi. The reply proposed was entirely in line with the policy of H.M.G. as recently re-stated by the Secretary of State for India in the House of Commons.[10] It was also within the terms of Sir Stafford Cripps' offer[11] of 1942 which we had again reiterated as our policy.

Other points made in discussion were:—

(*a*) Even as amended by the India Committee, the proposed reply was much too forthcoming and in much too friendly and conciliatory a spirit. We had to consider the reaction of correspondence of this nature on other parties. It would be best to stiffen the tone of the reply.

(*b*) A neutral statement in the third person by His Majesty's Government or the Government of India, setting out the policy of His Majesty's Government, would be preferable to an answer by the Viceroy.

(*c*) Attention was drawn, on the other hand, to the importance in dealing with Indians of combining the utmost firmness with great politeness and of scrupulous observance of form. Mr Gandhi had, after all, written his letter in response to a letter from Lord Wavell. It would be difficult, without giving rise to misunderstanding, and given our general policy of encouraging Indians to get together to reach agreement on India's problems, to refuse to let him have a reply.

(*d*) It was also urged that a statement by His Majesty's Government would be too great a compliment to Mr Gandhi.

(*e*) Attention was drawn to the absence of any reference to the position of the Indian States. While the government of the States might be open to criticism, we were under great obligations to them and they were entitled to full consideration. It was explained, however, that the correspondence had reference only to the transitional stage and to the government of British India. The States would not be affected at this point and reference to them was therefore not called for. They had not been mentioned in Mr Gandhi's letter or in the Viceroy's telegrams under reply.

Discussion ensued on the terms of the draft reply as amended by the India Committee. The following suggestions were made:—

(i) In general the draft should be stiffer and less forthcoming in tone, and more concise in statement.

(ii) *Paragraph 3*

Attention was drawn to the phrase "offer of complete and unqualified freedom".

(iii) *Paragraph 5*

(*a*) The suggestion was made that paragraph 5 of the draft as amended should stop at the end of the second sentence, with the words "on that basis".

(*b*) The Prime Minister suggested further examination of the words "moving fast towards a victorious conclusion".

(*c*) The suitability of the words "India can hardly play her proper part in the post-war settlement" in the last sentence (if retained) of paragraph 5 was questioned.

(iv) *Paragraph 6*

(*a*) In several passages the third person would be more appropriate than the first person.

[9] No. 597; the date should be 22 July. [10] See No. 615, note 1. [11] Vol. I, No. 456.

(*b*) It was suggested that for the fourth and subsequent sentences a passage on the following lines should be substituted:—

"I should be glad to help to achieve agreement if I thought I could do anything to help. But the Indian problem cannot make progress until the Indian Leaders are closer together than they are now. It is therefore on those Leaders that there rests the primary responsibility. Let me remind you too that minority problems are not easy. They are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance."

THE PRIME MINISTER, summing up the discussion, said that Indian policy raised issues of great delicacy and political importance and called for very careful handling. He would still have preferred that a situation in which the Viceroy was in correspondence with Mr Gandhi should not have arisen. As it had in fact arisen he agreed that a reply to Mr Gandhi should go from the Viceroy, and in general he accepted the soundness of the line proposed by the India Committee. He invited them, however, to reconsider their draft in the light of the discussion and of the specific suggestions for amendments which had been put forward, and to submit for consideration a revised draft. Meanwhile "X" he would himself communicate privately with the Viceroy and explain that a matter of this importance called for fuller consideration and that, despite any inconvenience caused, we must ask him to await the considered reply of His Majesty's Government.

The War Cabinet—

Endorsed the Prime Minister's proposals at "X".

624

Mr Churchill to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (via India Office)

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 142

IMMEDIATE *4 August 1944*

17170. Following from Prime Minister. Your 1491–S[1] of 1 Aug. We are much concerned at the negotiations which you have got into with Gandhi who was released on the medical advice that he would not again be able to take part in active politics. The Cabinet, advised by a special Cabinet Committee, sat long on the matter of your proposed answer to him. They will sit again to-morrow when I hope it may be possible to send you an answer for you to send Gandhi, which will be within the scope of the policy of H.M.G. I am sorry this delay should cause inconvenience to your movements; but you cannot expect these large issues to be dealt with without due consideration.

[1] No. 613.

625

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *4 August 1944, 2.30 pm*
Received: 4 August, 12.30 pm

No. 1503–S. Your telegram No. 17169[1] of 3rd August. Gandhi. I have also received personal message from Prime Minister. Meeting between Gandhi and Jinnah seems unlikely to produce results, though Gandhi may try to sidetrack main issue and secure Jinnah's co-operation in embarrassing His Majesty's Government, e.g. by joint demand for release of Working Committee. My main object was to let Gandhi know before he met Jinnah that his National Government plan has no (repeat no) chance of acceptance by His Majesty's Government and at the same time to indicate that His Majesty's Government are not (repeat not) opposed to a settlement and would welcome Hindu–Muslim agreement.

2. I leave for Assam via Calcutta tomorrow and am not (repeat not) changing programme. I return New Delhi 9th August, and if my reply to Gandhi is too late for meeting with Jinnah it cannot be helped.

[1] See No. 618, note 10.

626

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Churchill (via India Office)

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

4 August 1944

No. 1504–S. Personal from Viceroy for Prime Minister. Your No. 17170.[1] There is no question of negotiations at present. I am merely informing Gandhi of the position repeatedly stated by His Majesty's Government in the Cripps offer and since.

2. It was not possible to ignore medical opinions on Gandhi's health. They have proved mistaken as medical opinions sometimes are.

3. I have been guided throughout by your directive of October 8th.[2] All possible assistance in the prosecution of the war has been afforded to S.E.A.C. as Supreme Commander has expressly declared.

[1] No. 624. [2] Enclosure to No. 172.

4. I think you must admit that I have done my best to fulfil the second paragraph of directive though I have met with considerable reluctance on the part of His Majesty's Government to divert shipping for foodgrains.

5. I have borne constantly in mind the necessity to compose the differences between Hindus and Muslims. I do not think meeting between Gandhi and Jinnah will produce settlement but it will at least clear up position between two principal parties. I am naturally keeping rights and interests of other minorities in view.

6. I consider that any action I have so far taken has been fully in accord with paragraph 5 of your directive. I may say that both the recommendation for release of Gandhi and line I have taken in replying[3] to Gandhi's[4] letters have been mentioned to Executive Council who have unanimously supported them.

7. I do not think that Gandhi is doing himself or Congress any good by his present tortuous course and ambiguous statements. I think it would be wrong from every point of view for His Majesty's Government to adopt an entirely negative attitude. You can I think trust me in conjunction with Commander-in-Chief to see that war effort is in no way prejudiced.

8. I am not altering my plans and am proceeding tomorrow to Calcutta and on to Imphal next day. I shall return on 9th. It would have been better I think that reply should reach Gandhi before he saw Jinnah so that he should be under no illusion that his present proposals are in any way acceptable as basis for negotiation.

[3] Nos. 544 and 597. [4] Nos. 539 and 584.

627

Sir H. Dow (Sind) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/260: f 71

D.O. No. 236/FR GOVERNMENT HOUSE, KARACHI, *4 August 1944*

12. According to Sir Ghulam, Jinnah was much perturbed to find that the majority of Muslim Leaguers were strongly in favour of coming to an accommodation with the Congress on the basis of Gandhi's latest formula. The League Ministries in Bengal & the N-W.F.P. are both rather shaky, & think they can only remain in power by patching up their differences with Congress. Jinnah himself entirely distrusts Gandhi, whom he thinks has not moved in any essential particular from the position he took up two years ago; but the only way in which Jinnah could prevent his followers being outwitted

by Gandhi was to insist on taking sole charge himself of the negotiations with Gandhi. He therefore treated the matter as one of personal confidence in himself, & stoppered down any public discussion of the points in issue. Sir Ghulam himself seems entirely to agree with Jinnah's diagnosis of the present political position, & thinks that Gandhi is as intransigent as ever. I may say here that Sir Ghulam is constantly inquiring from me whether I have any inside knowledge of the Government of India's intentions with regard to the future of Gandhi & the Congress. What he probably fears is a wholesale jail delivery of the present detenues: he is dead against this, but if he were sure that you were contemplating this move, he would probably like to anticipate it by taking a less uncompromising attitude towards them than he has hitherto shown.

628

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 430

L/P&J/8/519: ff 160–4

Viceroy's Proposed Reply to Gandhi

NOTE BY THE SECRETARY

WAR CABINET OFFICES, S.W.1, *4 August 1944*

As directed by the War Cabinet at their meeting on 3rd August,[1] the India Committee have further considered[2] the terms of the reply to be sent by the Viceroy to Mr Gandhi's letter of 27th July.[3]

The draft recommended by the Viceroy is printed as Appendix IV to W.P. (44) 426.[4]

The reply which the Committee now recommend should be sent is set out below. The alterations which have been made in the draft which the Cabinet considered on 3rd August are indicated.

E. E. BRIDGES

Enclosure to No. 628

DRAFT REPLY TO MR GANDHI AS FURTHER AMENDED BY INDIA COMMITTEE ON 4TH AUGUST

[*The draft which the India Committee now recommended was the same as the draft in No. 632 except for the additions and amendment noted in No. 629.*]

1 No. 623.
2 The Cabinet Office Index states that no minutes of this meeting were issued. R/30/1/4: f 7.
3 See No. 614. 4 No. 620.

629

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 102nd Conclusions

Those present at this meeting held in the Cabinet War Room on 4 August 1944 at 3 pm were: Mr Churchill (in the Chair), Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson, Mr Oliver Lyttelton, Mr Herbert Morrison, Lord Woolton

Also present during discussion of items 1 and 2 were: Viscount Cranborne, Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Mr Hugh Dalton (item 2 only), Mr Brendan Bracken, Lord Cherwell

Minute 1

L/P&J/8/519: f 123

INDIA

Gandhi

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 100th Conclusions, Minute 4[3])[1]

The War Cabinet at their meeting on 3rd August invited the India Committee to consider further the terms of the draft reply to be sent by the Viceroy to Mr Gandhi's letter[2] of 27th July (Appendix IV to W.P. (44) 426.)[3] They now had before them the report of the Committee (W.P. (44) 430)[4] submitting a revised draft telegram.

The sense of the War Cabinet was very strongly that (*a*) we must be at pains to protect the position of the Untouchables in any arrangements for the future government of India, and that we should bring out equally that there was no intention of failing in the discharge of the other obligations which we had incurred to racial or religious minorities or to the Indian States; (*b*) it was important to make it clear that we regarded ourselves as in no sense open to criticism for our trusteeship of India.

After discussion, the War Cabinet approved the draft telegram appended to W.P. (44) 430, subject to the following amendments:—

(*a*) *Paragraph 3.* Add at end—"The object of these conditions was to ensure fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the depressed classes, and their Treaty obligations to the Indian States."

(*b*) *Paragraph 4.* Second sentence—after the words "and that until" insert the words "the invasion peril is removed".

(*c*) *Paragraph 4.* Last sentence—before "arrangements" insert "financial".

(*d*) *Paragraph 5.* Fifth sentence—amend to read:[5] "... agreement in principle between Hindus and Muslims and all important elements as to the method by which the new Constitution should be framed."

Minute 2

R/30/1/4: ff 12–15

INDIA

Financial Questions

(Previous Reference: W.M. (43) 111th Conclusions, Minute 1)[6]

Exactly a year ago the War Cabinet had appointed a Standing Committee on Indian Financial Questions under the Chairmanship of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with the following terms of reference:—

"The Committee's first task is to consider steps to combat inflation in India. This enquiry should cover such questions as whether some part of India's capacity, now devoted to war production, should not be switched back to the manufacture of consumer goods.

The Committee's second task is to examine the growing indebtedness of the United Kingdom to India."

The War Cabinet now had before them a report from the Committee (W.P. (44) 398)[7] the conclusions of which are summarised as follows:—

(a) *Inflation.*

Considerable progress has been made by the Government of India towards securing command of the situation, but the question how much further assistance is required from outside, if India is to stand the strain involved in the South-East Asia campaign, cannot yet be answered.

(b) *United Kingdom Expenditure.*

It is inopportune to propose any amendment of the Defence Expenditure Plan. Nor can the supplies which His Majesty's Government are drawing from India be forgone. It is possible, for the present, only to ensure that the terms of contracts under which supplies are obtained are as favourable as circumstances allow, and to aim at keeping down inflation, with its inevitable repercussion upon costs.

(c) *Sterling Balances.*

The future growth of the balances cannot be either estimated or prevented, and we must rely upon effecting a settlement in respect of India's abnormal balances at a more propitious time. Meanwhile, nothing should be done to prejudice this ultimate settlement.

[1] No. 623. [2] See No. 614. [3] No. 620. [4] No. 628.

[5] In the draft in No. 628 this sentence read: 'For such a transitional government to succeed there must, before it is formed, be agreement in principle between Hindus and Moslems and the important minorities as to the method by which the new Constitution should be framed.'

[6] No. 71. [7] L/F/7/687: ff 45–9.

The main point dealt with in discussion was *the growth of India's sterling balances.*

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER explained that some part of India's large holding of sterling was accounted for by the excess of India's exports to, over imports from, other countries in the sterling area, or Canada and the United States. These were commercial transactions, and the proceeds of the sales, whether in sterling or dollars, had been credited to us, and we had therefore received good value.

There was no doubt, however, that a considerable part of India's sterling balances was the result of war transactions which were sterile in the sense that we had received no commercial benefit therefrom. Moreover, these transactions had taken place at a time of inflation in India, and, apart from inflation, in certain cases we had paid altogether excessive prices. This aspect of the matter was being fully examined.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had no doubt that in the end we should be able to make a strong case for scaling down our liabilities and for making repayments by easy stages, subject to the condition that in the meantime this country would secure an ample share of the volume of Indian trade.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer added that no obligations had been entered into as regards payment of interest on these balances. While the task of negotiating a settlement of this matter would be a formidable one, he saw no reason why a settlement should not be reached on the lines which he had indicated, which would not involve us in an undue burden.

This led to discussion of the *Defence Expenditure Plan*, which governed the incidence of military expenditure as between India and the United Kingdom.

THE PRIME MINISTER reminded the War Cabinet that this plan had been drawn up in 1940 before Japan had entered the war. It had never since been revised, and now imposed an altogether unfair burden on this country. We were entitled to put in a counter-claim which would include such items as the part played by British naval, military and air forces in the defence of India against invasion.

The War Cabinet were reminded that this matter had been considered in September 1942.[8] At that time it had been decided to send a communication[9] to the Viceroy, for communication to the Government of India, putting on record the War Cabinet's view that the entry of Japan into the war had fundamentally changed the situation since the Financial Settlement of 1940 had been negotiated; that, while we did not suggest that a new settlement should be negotiated at the present juncture, a further review and eventual adjustment of financial relations between the United Kingdom and India would assuredly be required.

The War Cabinet were also reminded that the Viceroy, after receiving this telegram, had strongly advised[10] against communicating to his Council what

amounted to a formal reservation by His Majesty's Government in regard to the future treatment of the debt which Britain was incurring to India under the present settlement. The Viceroy had urged that to do so might have grave consequences on the political situation and on the industrial and commercial aspect of India's war effort. In consequence, no communication on the matter had yet been made to the Government of India.

THE PRIME MINISTER said that he felt growing uneasiness at the position. He was sure that the facts of the position were not understood by Parliament or the public. Furthermore, he would have greatly preferred that we should before now have given some clear indication to the Government of India of our attitude to this matter. He felt strongly that the principle of a counter-claim was justified on merits, and hoped that he would have the support of his colleagues in maintaining this attitude.

After some further discussion, the War Cabinet—

(1) Took note with general approval of the Report of the Committee on Indian Financial Questions (W.P. (44) 398) and of the course of action set out therein.

(2) Reaffirmed the conclusion reached by the War Cabinet in September 1942 that the basis of the financial settlement of 1940 was no longer appropriate; and agreed that we were entitled to seek a readjustment of the position on a wider basis, which would take into account, among other factors, the extent to which British forces and material, both in India itself and elsewhere, had contributed to save India from invasion.

[8] Previous Reference: W.M. (42) 129th Conclusions, Minute 2. Vol. III, No. 24.
[9] Vol. III, No. 27. [10] Vol. III, No. 56.

630

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 113

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *4 August 1944, 8.15 pm*

PRIVATE

656. My official telegram No. 17197[1] dated 4th Aug. I am afraid the Cabinet have introduced a good many amendments to your draft, but they felt that it was essential to recapitulate clearly the main points of our statement[2] of policy of 1942 and answer Gandhi's points specifically. From that point of view they

[1] This informed Lord Wavell that the Cabinet had approved the text of the reply to Mr Gandhi in the late afternoon of 4 August but as there were considerable amendments to be checked, Mr Amery could not guarantee despatch of the text that night. L/P&J/8/519: f 165.
[2] Vol. I, No. 456.

felt that his reference to the cost of the war ought not to pass unnoticed and I can only hope that the way in which this has been expressed will avoid starting a new controversy. On the other hand they thought it would be sufficient, for the formation of a provisional government, that leaders should be agreed upon the method of arriving at a constitution without stipulating for agreement on the actual broad principles. After all, the issue of Pakistan may not arise in categorical form so long as the method of framing the constitution leaves it open as in the case of method suggested by Cripps. The reference to depressed classes was one to which Prime Minister attaches great importance. On the whole I hope you will think that the revised draft, which, though stiffer in tone changes nothing of substance, meets the situation satisfactorily.

631

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 122

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *5 August 1944, 10.20 am*

SECRET

17257. Your telegram No. 1491–S[1] dated 1st August. His Majesty's Government have very carefully considered your proposed reply to Gandhi and my immediately succeeding telegram contains re-draft which they have approved. They consider it very important that to keep initiative in our hands this correspondence should be released as soon as Gandhi has received your reply. You should make it clear to Gandhi in whatever way you think fit, that immediate publication is proposed. Please let me know in advance exact time and date of publication.

[1] No. 613.

632

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: ff 120–1

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *5 August 1944, 10.20 am*

SECRET

17258. My immediately preceding telegram. Following is text of draft reply to Gandhi. *Begins*: Paragraph 1 as in your telegram No. 1493–S.[1]

2. Such proposals are quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis for discussion and you must realise this if you have read Mr. Amery's

statement in the House of Commons on 28th July last. They are indeed very similar to the proposal made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942 and His Majesty's Government's reasons for rejecting them are the same as they were then.

3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail I should remind you that His Majesty's Government at that time made it clear (a) that their offer of unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was made conditional upon the framing of a Constitution agreed by the main elements of India's national life and the negotiation of the necessary treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. (b) that it is impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the Constitution, by which means alone a "national Government", such as you suggest, could be made responsible to the Central Assembly. The object of these conditions was to ensure fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the depressed classes and their Treaty obligations to the Indian States.

4. It was upon the above conditions that His Majesty's Government invited the Indian leaders to take part in an interim government, which would operate under the existing Constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over the responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of the Government, and that until the invasion peril is removed, hostilities cease and the new Constitution is in operation, His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between His Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing financial arrangements can only be re-opened at the instance of one or other of those governments.

5. Your present proposal is consequently not one which I could recommend for the acceptance of His Majesty's Government. No purpose would, therefore, be served by discussion on that basis. At the same time His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. If the leaders of Hindus, Moslems and the important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe good progress might be made. For such a transitional government to succeed there must before it is formed be agreement in principle between Hindus and Moslems and all important elements as to the method by which the new Constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. Until the Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now, I doubt if I myself can do anything

[1] No. 615.

to help. Let me remind you, too, that minority problems are not easy. They are real, and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance.

6. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional Government would last would depend on the speed with which the new Constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that Constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian Leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they can arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the Constitution, no unnecessary time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in agreeing treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. There again the primary responsibility rests on the Indian Leaders.

633

Sir R. Campbell to Mr Eden

Telegram, L/I/1/1379: f 134

IMMEDIATE
SECRET

WASHINGTON, *8 August 1944, 10.33 pm*
Received: 9 August, 5.55 am

No. 4259. India Office telegram No. 17333[1] containing draft reply to Gandhi.

From point of view of effect on public opinion here there would be great advantage if statement of anxiety of His Majesty's Government for solution of Indian problem (which does not occur until paragraph 5) could be given earlier prominence. At present the statement of Gandhi's proposals is immediately followed by unequivocal rejection of them. Probable adverse effect on United States public opinion of this form of presentation could be mitigated if, either before statement of proposals or immediately after them, there could by inserted expression of His Majesty's Government's adherence to Cripps' offer to struggle for early settlement on lines already offered.

[1] Of 5 August. This tel. transmitted to H.M. Ambassador, Washington, the text of the draft reply to Mr Gandhi as in No. 632. L/I/1/1379.

634

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/P&S/13/981: ff 83–5

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *9 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

D.O. No. F. 681/2/GG/43

My dear Amery,

Thank you for your private and secret letter of 22nd May[1] about the Indian States. It will be useful I think if I summarise the points on which we are in substantial agreement. My letter of 20th April[2] suggested:—

(*a*) that our solemn commitment to grant self-government to British India as early as possible is not compatible with our equally solemn commitments to the Indian States to preserve them in their present form;

(*b*) that any suggestion that the Indian States could form a separate Union of their own, if a settlement was made with British India on the lines of the Cripps offer, is impractical;

(*c*) that the only way out of the present impasse is that the Indian States should somehow or other be accommodated in the Indian Union of the future;

(*d*) that, while the manner in which this objective is to be attained cannot be accurately foreseen at present, it is clear that all we can do for the petty States at any rate is to try and secure for them as much as possible of their privileges and pomps, in fact that, when the time comes, they should be let down as lightly as possible;

(*e*) that for the present it is not advisable to explain the real situation frankly to the Princes and that, if we are forced to define our attitude, we should confine any public statement of policy which we may have to make to the formula employed in our letter of January 4th 1943 to the Pro-Chancellor.[3]

So far as they go these are important conclusions and I am glad to see that you agree with them.

2. In paragraph 3 of your letter you suggest—very rightly I think—that the States should, if possible, be brought to consider the practical ways and means by which a greater political integration among them—or groups of them—can be achieved with the ultimate object of getting them to work out a machinery for association with or incorporation into an All-India Union (or Unions). You recognise at the same time however that, so long as the general tendency

[1] No. 513. [2] No. 467. [3] See Vol. III, No. 309, note 4.

is to stand on the treaty position, the Princes are little likely to consider seriously how they should accommodate themselves to what is still a hypothetical situation. I agree with this conclusion; and my information is in fact that the Princes, including even the smallest, are secretly saying among themselves something like this. Let us "wait and see". We have survived a great many crises in our time. If there is going to be a revolution in India we shall almost certainly go out. Even that fate is however better than tame surrender of our present status to meet the alleged needs of a situation which nobody in fact can at this stage accurately foresee. If this is in fact how their minds are working, I doubt if there is anything to be gained by urging them at this stage to work out detailed machinery for a very hypothetical situation. And you will not forget that the Princes lack an organization which can speak for them all. The really important States keep—regrettably—less and less contact with the Chamber of Princes. Inside the Chamber there has grown up recently an important cleavage between the more important medium sized States like Patiala, Bikaner and Bhopal, who used to run the organization, and the smaller States who are now, as a result of the reorganization of the Chamber which took place some years back, represented in force on the Standing Committee etc. When their forces are divided in this fashion there is little hope of a united effort to devise a policy for the salvation of the Indian States as a whole. When I meet the Princes in September therefore I shall avoid, if at all possible, giving any fresh pledge at all; and if necessary simply refer to [? our] letter of 4th January 1943 to the Pro-Chancellor.

3. I have considered the suggestion contained in paragraph 4 of your letter. It would be easy no doubt in private conversations to press on the more important States the necessity for a rationalisation of the present lay-out of the States system—this is in fact being done now by my Political Adviser in off the record conversations, particularly with selected Dewans of important States—but I am advised that it is quite impossible to hope that the larger States might in practice be able to secure the merger of their smaller neighbours with the latter's consent. The moment any such proposal was mooted my advisers say that the small States concerned would take refuge behind the Treaty position when we would be back again at the original dilemma. And there are many small States—the majority in fact—which are so situated that there is no contiguous or adjacent large State in which they could conveniently be merged. The provisions of Section 290 of the Constitution Act prevent us from considering the merger even of isolated fragments of Indian States territory into a Province so long as a Section 93 administration continues in that Province.

4. I think that the suggestions contained in paragraph 6 of your letter might possibly be worth trying and I am instructing my Political Department to

bear their possibilities in mind. The smaller States throughout India are however, as a result of the attachment scheme—and to a lesser extent of our grouping proposals—in a highly suspicious frame of mind and I doubt very much whether any substantial advance is to be secured, even with the full co-operation of the major States, in obtaining the merger of any appreciable number of small units with their consent.

5. I find your remarks about the transfer of relations from Provincial Governments to the centre interesting though on a point of detail I think you must mean the Punjab States Agency and not the Eastern States Agency in paragraph 6 of your letter. It is in the former Agency that the greatest measure of success has been achieved by the States employing neighbouring Provincial police officers as Police Advisers and so on.

6. I have read the note[4] prepared in the India Office about the mediatisation of the German princelings with much interest though I agree with you that the practical lessons which the history of events in Germany from 1803 onwards contains for us are of very limited utility for the solution of our own problem.

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[4] See No. 467, note 9.

635

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *9 August 1944*
Received: 16 August

We had a hectic week over India, more particularly over your reply[1] to Gandhi. The matter was first referred to the Standing India Committee of the Cabinet, who fell upon the task of amendment with avidity—my own suggested amendments[2] had been very limited, the only one of importance really being a reference to the negotiation of a treaty before the new Indian Government came into operation. However, such as it was, the revised draft[3] then became the subject of much debate[4] and was remitted to the Committee for further amendment.[5] Then, when it returned to the Cabinet,[6] the Prime Minister had his own additions to suggest, more particularly with regard to the Depressed Classes, and it was only then that we reached finality. I think the revised document is all right in substance, though I dare say it may be considered somewhat unsympathetic in tone. However, the essential point is to

[1] See No. 615. [2] Appendix V to No. 620. [3] No. 622. [4] See No. 623, Minute 3.
[5] See No. 628. [6] See No. 629, Minute 1.

make clear once again that we stand by the 1942 proposals, but also by the conditions accompanying them.

2. One reason why I myself would sooner not have dragged in the Depressed Classes is that their case is not strictly speaking relevant in a brief summary of the Cripps proposals. But I also see the inherent difficulty of doing anything to protect people scattered in small, unorganised, leaderless communities all over India. Whatever words may be put into the Constitution, their only chance lies in their organising themselves, for which an almost indispensable prelude may be formal breaking away from the Hindu community and embracing a new religion, or indeed in a gradual change of outlook among Hindus generally. Our case for making the position of the Untouchables a plea for holding back over self-government is very weak when we consider how little we have been able to do for them in the past and how little prospect there is of our doing very much for them if we did stay on for another generation or more. I feel much more concerned for small minorities like the Anglo-Indians or the Backward Tribes, who do enjoy a certain measure of protection at present and may suffer seriously when we leave.

3. We also had up once again[7] the subject of sterling balances, with the usual fulmination from Winston that when the time comes he will present our bill against India for all we have done to defend her, to which I naturally replied that I might produce a similar bill for the direct and indirect consequences of India's saving the Middle East. Anyhow, it has been agreed that the subject is not to be raised with the Government of India for the present, and the longer that is the case the more likely we are, as a Government, to accept the sound conclusion that this is a matter to be settled by agreement in the long-term interest of all concerned. It certainly is not to our interest to destroy a sterling system based entirely on our reputation for integrity by bilking our creditors: equally it is not in the interest of India or other sterling holders to depreciate the assets they have acquired by rushing off to dump too much sterling on the outside market.

4. The real items that can be brought up legitimately by the United Kingdom over this business are:—

(1) The fact that, unlike the Dominions, India has not paid for such equipment of her forces as she could not provide herself. Some of this item may indeed be met by India's purchasing at the end of the war for her own future needs this equipment which is still legally the property of His Majesty's Government.

(2) There is the point that in the last two years of inflation we here have paid an unduly high price for many articles. It is no doubt perfectly true that if it had not been for the sterling link the rupee might well

have risen to 3 or 4*s*. in so far as we were the only buyers of rupees and were forced by war necessities to buy. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the present price of the rupee is an artificial one. After the war India could only maintain that price by rigorous internal deflation, which would have the most serious effect on all business enterprise, and consequently on the whole business of reconstruction. The alternative to deflation in order to maintain the price of the rupee would be devaluation of the rupee to a new rate, e.g. 1*s*. If that were done it would certainly justify the obvious comment that this country had been overcharged to a corresponding amount and that we had paid India more sterling than was really required to meet her increasing issue of rupees. It seems to me that these and other points can all be discussed in a reasonable atmosphere and on business lines at the end of the war. If it were not for Winston's personal attitude I should myself think that a good deal could be said for opening discussions at an early date. As it is, I think we can only wait, and you must put up with the fact that you are not likely to get for the present any better statement than that which Anderson made[8] not long ago.

5. Bajpai's position came up again,[9] but in spite of vigorous support from Halifax, I could make no impression on Winston, and the most I was able to secure was that the issue was again deferred for the next six months.

6. Well, six months may see many things happening. The American breakthrough into Britanny and their swing round eastwards may give the lie to all my pessimistic fears[10] that we might go on being held in a small Normandy bridgehead. It is at least on the cards that Germany may collapse in the next three or four months. We shall then be in an entirely new atmosphere, even if there is no general election and a different government here.

7. In the course of a letter[11] to me Casey said that he was directing attention in Bengal to water problems of the Province. He thinks, and I am sure he is right, that mismanagement of these in the past is a contributory factor of some importance to Bengal's present troubles. He intends in due course to set about finding some high-level experts on a number of aspects of irrigation, drainage and river control, and is at present thinking on the lines of a panel of three, each member an expert in his own line. However, he does not think it would be any use obtaining experts unless and until his Government have at least a minimum of data to put before them, as in the past quite inadequate attention has been paid in Bengal to the keeping of data on hydrological matters. In replying to him[12] I have suggested that it would be right for him first to consult

[7] See No. 629, Minute 2. [8] See No. 591, note 2. [9] See No. 623, Minute 2.
[10] See No. 594, para. 8. [11] Dated 19 July 1944. The relevant extract is on L/E/8/2687.
[12] In a letter dated 9 August. The relevant extract is *ibid.*

the Government of India, both because of the substantial proportion of experts in the world on water problems who are already serving or have obtained their experience in India, and because the Government of India will require many water experts to advise them on irrigation and drainage problems in other Provinces besides Bengal. It seems to me that experts in this field will be required all over India in connection with post-war development, and in order to make the best and most economical use of the experts already available in India and of the experts who will undoubtedly have to be obtained overseas, the co-ordination of the requirements of all Provinces will be necessary.

[Para. 8, on the attaching of the title "The Hon'ble" to India's representatives abroad, omitted.]

9. In paragraph 8 of your letter of the 27th July[13] you mention your talk with Dorman-Smith about tribal areas. I quite agree with you that that is a matter essentially to be dealt with in the treaty arrangements and, as I have said in paragraph 2 of this letter, that is the kind of minority which we can protect by treaty. I imagine the arrangement would be very much on the lines of the High Commission territories in South Africa, i.e. that they should remain directly under the Crown Representative until such time as His Majesty's Government, after the inhabitants have been consulted, feel justified in transferring them to an Indian Government. That need not, of course, take place simultaneously and I imagine such a large area as the joint tribal area round the Burma frontier might remain under the Crown Representative for a generation or more. When the South African Union took place in 1909 it was always supposed that the Protectorates would be transferred in the course of a decade or so. 35 years have passed, and it now seems not unlikely that Swaziland, the smallest and least contentious of the Protectorates, may be transferred soon after the war; but it is not very likely that Basutoland, the most difficult, will change hands for another ten or even twenty years.

10. You raise in paragraph 7 of the same letter the question of the future industrialisation of the States, or rather of some of the bigger of them. I think that is very likely to happen, not only for the reasons you mention, but possibly because the States may wish to take the opportunity of encouraging British firms who may be being squeezed out by Indian economic nationalism from British India, and may wish to strengthen their British connection and the interest of this country in their affairs. I see no reason, in spite of the danger of tax evasion in British India, why we should discourage that process. After all, if British India gets self-government, we shall not be able simply to jettison our responsibility for the Princes (any more than we have been able to do so in a similar South African situation). From that point of view anything that increases the revenues and resources of the States and puts them in a position to

look after their own defence if need be, or at any rate to bargain with "British" India on a footing of greater equality, can only be useful. It would be a curious development if, a generation hence, the States were "British" India and the present British India "Indian" India!

11. I should be very interested to hear from you your final conclusions as to non-official Advisers in Bombay. You will remember that when Linlithgow submitted the matter to the Council,[14] the solution most of them favoured was reverting to the Executive Council of pre-1921, with Indian members; in other words, to a form of government parallel to that at the Centre. I am not altogether sure whether, pending either an Indian-devised Constitution or some such suggestion as I have made in my last letter[15] about an interim Constitution imposed by ourselves, or even an interim enforcement of the 1935 Act, that may not be the only feasible way of associating responsible Indians with ourselves in the task of government, and building up a body of men who may eventually exercise an important influence in Indian affairs, especially if the future Constitution avoids the British model.

12. The Chiefs of Staff have been busy with their review of the food situation and I understand that their report is quite helpful. But it has still to go to the P.M. and possibly Leathers may also make difficulties. So I won't cheer before we are out of the wood, though I hope to be able to let you have your telegram before this reaches you.

13. I have just seen Woodhead's first press interview and his announcement of how he means to handle the work of the Commission. It all reads very well and I gather that, in spite of the inevitable suggestions that an Indian should preside, Woodhead has been well received.

10 August

14. Gandhi's "symbolic" civil disobedience in Bombay yesterday seems to have passed off very quietly. I don't think it will have created any sympathy for him here. On the contrary, there is a growing feeling that the old man is so hopelessly inconsistent and incalculable that it is a waste of time trying to find out what he really does mean. *Punch* has quite a good cartoon this week:[16] if I can get hold of a copy I will enclose it with this letter.

[Para. 15, on a Commons' debate on welfare for troops in India, omitted.]

16. Talking of the future, Winston, in an eloquent peroration to the Cabinet of all he meant to do for India after the war in the way of direct regeneration from here, did touch on a point of fundamental importance, namely, the whole system of fragmented land tenure. He suggested our following the Russian example of creating large collectivised farms—a particular Russian method

[13] No. 607.
[14] See Vol. II, Nos. 666 and 672, paras. 7 and 8 and Vol. III, No. 298.
[15] No. 618.
[16] Not reproduced.

that is hardly suitable to Indian conditions; but I wonder whether much cannot be done on the lines of the Gezirah irrigation scheme, or even of the Dutch system in Java. Under the former system the irrigated land is leased to tenants with a share in the profits, but under definite control so as to secure the best farming methods. Under the Dutch system, as I have heard it reported, the Government does not attempt to acquire permanent ownership of the land, but leases it from all the smallholders over a particular area and then works that area as a single estate, employing the owners of the land as cultivators for wages. I suppose one could also employ sub-tenants. The scheme is certainly ingenious in that it enables cultivation of a big scale and by methods of modern efficiency, without displacing the existing owners from their dwellings or from the sense that the land still ultimately belongs to them. I wonder whether you have looked into either of these methods?

PS.—I have just had a talk with Sir Henry Tidy, who was very much impressed, when in India, by the difference between those who had been out over four years, whether civil or military, and those who had only been out two years or so. The former all seemed to him to be limp and jaded and definitely unable to do a full day's efficient work. This of course affects the military question which I have discussed earlier in this letter and strengthens the argument for a shorter period of service in India, especially in the climate of Eastern India. It also raises the much wider question of future leave arrangements for the I.C.S. and other services. In this air age it ought to be possible, without detriment to work, to give leave much more frequently, but also for much shorter periods and avoid the discontinuity of the old system of one year's leave after five. He also spoke to me of what I know is very much in your mind and Lady Wavell's namely the woeful shortage of nurses in India.

636

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *10 August 1944, 1.50 pm*
SECRET *Received: 10 August, 2.15 pm*

No. 1546–S. Your No. 659[1] of 4th August.

1. Owing to difficulties of communication due to my absence in Manipur and Assam I have only on my return today been able to compare your revised draft[2] and my original one.[3]

2. There is no difference in principle and objective between the two drafts but I do consider there is vital difference in form and part of matter [*sic*].

Indians are most sensitive to tone of communications and His Majesty's Government's revised draft will undoubtedly be considered as hostile and provocative and will increase bitterness in feeling of all political Indians. It will also, I think, be bad in effect on opinion in U.S.A. and elsewhere.

3. I therefore submit in succeeding telegram revised draft with which I propose to reply to Gandhi's letter. It embodies some of amendments in His Majesty's Government's draft but omits reference to financial settlement which I consider it unnecessary to raise at this stage and paragraph 3 and first sentence of paragraph 4 of Cabinet draft which would lead to useless controversy on legal lines. Jinnah is almost certain to take with Gandhi in any case the points which His Majesty's Government have in mind.

4. I am assuming that His Majesty's Government are sincere in their wishes to make progress towards political settlement. I can assure them that it is my considered opinion that their proposed reply will do more harm than good. I can also assure them that I am fully alive to Gandhi's past record and present objectives and have no intention of entering into negotiation with him on his present basis. At the same time there is some possibility in present mood of political India of making progress towards solution of deadlock and I think His Majesty's Government would be unwise to do anything likely to destroy that hope, however faint, by being too uncompromising in their attitude.

5. My proposed reply was drawn up in consultation with my Home Department and Reforms Commissioner (an Indian) who have no reason to trust Gandhi or Congress but are in touch with feeling here. I think you must be prepared to accept advice of man on spot in this matter and trust that my reply which gives away nothing in principle will be approved.

[1] This should read '656'; i.e. No. 630. [2] See No. 632. [3] See No. 615.

637

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *10 August 1944, 2 pm*
SECRET *Received: 10 August, 3.30 pm*

No. 1547–S. My immediately preceding telegram. Following is suggested redraft of reply to Gandhi. Paragraphs one and two as in my No. 1493–S.[1]

Paragraph three—

Begins. Although His Majesty's Government cannot accept your present proposal, and we could make no progress if we met in order to discuss it,

[1] No. 615.

I must assure you that they are most anxious for a settlement of the Indian problem. I do not wish to prejudge any proposals that may later be made to me, but if the leaders of the Hindus, Muslims, Depressed Classes and other important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present Constitution, I believe good progress could be made. It is quite clear that until the war is over responsibility for Defence and Military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of Government, and that until the new Constitution is in operation His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. It is obvious that for a transitional government to succeed there must before it is formed be agreement in principle between Hindus and Muslims and all other important elements as to the method by which the new Constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for the Indian leaders themselves and I doubt if I can do anything to help them to secure it until they have come closer together than they are now. Minority problems are not easy and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance. *Ends.*

Paragraph four—

Begins. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional government would last would depend upon the speed with which the new Constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on the new Constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they can arrive now at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing new Constitution as suggested above I see no reason why any very long time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in negotiating a treaty with His Majesty's Government. *Ends.*

Paragraph five—

As in my No. 1493–S.

638

Note by Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

Wavell Papers. Notes of Important Interviews, 1944–7, pp 65–6

INTERVIEW WITH SIR ARDESHIR DALAL ON 10TH AUGUST 1944

9. On the political issue he said that the recent emphasis on economic planning in the Commons debate[1] might hamper his work, as it had created an impression that His Majesty's Government was trying to by-pass the political problem by drawing the red herring of economic progress across the path. I said that

what was in the mind of His Majesty's Government, I was sure, was that whatever form of government came into power the economic problems of India had to be dealt with; and that we must get on with them in anticipation of a political settlement. I said that also if the various parties could be got to work together on definite economic problems, they would find it much easier to settle their political differences. I again instanced the Punjab Government, and said that the biggest political mistake that had been made in India recently was the attitude of the Congress Ministries towards minorities during the period they were in power, and the withdrawal of the Congress Ministries on the outbreak of war. He said that Pakistan would be fatal to India's economic development; and I said that I entirely agreed, but that Pakistan was largely the creation of the Congress itself by its attitude towards the Muslims while in power.

WAVELL,—10. 8. 44

[1] See No. 617, note 3.

639

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *10 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

I have no letter from you to answer this week, and I understand you were too busy with the debate[1] to write one. It is reported in some of the papers here that the attendance at the debate was very poor and showed a lack of interest in Indian affairs. Is there any truth in this?

I have just returned from a short visit to Imphal, Kohima and Dimapur. At Imphal I saw 7 or 8 units of the R.A.F., and also visited the headquarters and the three brigades of the 20th Indian Division on the Palel Road. I spent one afternoon in the Bishenpur area where there was fierce fighting for many weeks. Fortunately villages do not take much rebuilding in these parts, and it will not take long to repair the ravages of war.

The troops are in very good heart, and there is no doubt that the Japanese have suffered a very severe defeat. The wounded and stragglers who are now being overtaken at Tamu and beyond are in very poor condition, and large quantities of equipment have been abandoned.

[The last two sub-paras. of para. 1, on the Political Agent and food situation in Manipur; and para. 2, on the itinerary of Lord Wavell's tour, omitted.]

[1] See No. 617, note 5.

3. The general food situation is unchanged. I have had an official report that Travancore and Cochin are in for a serious scarcity owing to the failure of the south-west monsoon. The report says that the crops in these States will not be more than one-third of normal. I am reminding[2] you about the review of food imports. It is really most necessary to make a further announcement without delay.

4. I do not like the War Cabinet's draft[3] of the reply to Gandhi. It does not differ greatly in substance from the draft I proposed, but seems to me much more unfriendly. As I explained in one of my telegrams,[4] our immediate object should be to get as good a press as we can without giving anything away. Politeness costs nothing and is likely to pay a dividend not only here, but at home and in the United States. I have telegraphed[5] to you about the draft. The meeting between Gandhi and Jinnah is not now likely to take place before the 15th August. In the meantime, Gandhi, who had advised Congressmen not to break the law on 9th August (the anniversary of the arrests of 1942), has attempted to sponsor some kind of token demonstration in Bombay. His idea apparently was that the Quit India resolution should be read out at two meetings to which two small processions were to march. The Bombay Government did not permit these demonstrations, and arrested about 25 people.

5. I sent by the bag of 27th July a copy of my letter to Colville[6] about the possible substitution of non-official for official Advisers in Bombay. I am sending by this bag a copy of Colville's reply.[7] He takes the orthodox view and is quite likely right. But it is disappointing to be unable to do anything to make Section 93 more palatable to educated Indians.

6. I have just sent a reply[8] to your letter of 22nd May[9] about the future of small States. You will shortly receive another most complicated letter from the Political Department about modifications in the Kathiawar attachment scheme. Wylie has never been happy about the scheme, and thinks that it could be made both less objectionable to the small Chiefs affected by it and more effective from the administrative point of view. The letter, which I approved in draft, deals with many legal and technical points, and is I think a good piece of work.

7. There is nothing much to report from the Provinces. The newspapers are giving some prominence to the cholera epidemic in Bihar, which is still pretty bad. I stayed a night with Casey on my way to Imphal. He is still very anxious about his political problem, and pressed me hard to agree to Section 93 on the ground that Nazimuddin's Government is making no headway with administration, and that whatever happens in the Bengal Assembly, Ministerial rule in Bengal must go, for a time at least. I told him that last January we had a very good case for Section 93, and educated opinion all over India was almost certainly with us; now I was not anxious to add to the number of Section 93

Provinces, and would avoid Section 93 in Bengal if I could. The food situation has improved, and the Japanese threat on the Eastern Frontier has been defeated. We cannot therefore argue immediate necessity, and there is no doubt that the more we use Section 93 the more difficult it will be to revert to normal conditions in the Provinces. Casey was not impressed, and said that he had the gravest apprehensions about food in 1945. He may be right, and I would agree to Section 93 if it came naturally through a Parliamentary breakdown. But I am certainly not anxious to go all out for it. What moves Casey is the weakness of his administrative machine. He is putting on the pace, and trying to collect experts from other Provinces and from Australia and New Zealand. This is all to the good, but in this country one has in the end to realise that whatever the quality of the higher staff the subordinates are mostly poor and that progress is always slower than one hopes.

Casey is in very good heart, and works with indefatigable energy, but I am not altogether happy about his health standing the climate and the pace he has set himself.

8. I shall be in New Delhi until the end of August. I have a Governors' Conference on the 29th, 30th and 31st, but otherwise no engagements of any special importance.

9. Have you read *The Bear of Britain* by [E. P.] Frankland,[10] a rather grim and realistic presentation of the Arthurian legend, and the state of Britain after the Roman withdrawal, it would interest you.

[2] L/E/8/3324. [3] See No. 632. [4] Presumably No. 613. [5] No. 636.
[6] Dated 19 July 1944. L/P&J/8/591. [7] Dated 31 July 1944. *Ibid.* [8] No. 634.
[9] No. 513. [10] London, Macdonald & Co., 1944.

640

Sir H. Twynam (Central Provinces and Berar) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/193: f 71

GOVERNOR'S CAMP, CENTRAL PROVINCES AND BERAR, *10 August 1944*

SECRET

No. R–24/G.C.P.

Dear Lord Wavell,

There is not much material for comment in the Chief Secretary's report[1] enclosed herewith and this letter will be a brief one only in view of our forthcoming meeting.

The principal event, so far as we are concerned, has been Gandhi's return to Sevagram. Both the Central Intelligence Officer and the local District

[1] Not printed.

Superintendent of Police have been keeping their ears as close to the ground as possible in connection with activities at the Ashram and the comings and goings of leading personalities. I have seen some interesting reports but I cannot say that they are mutually reconcilable in all cases. I cannot accept responsibility for the correctness of these reports but mention some of the salient features for information. The District Superintendent of Police is informed that Gandhi had drafted a statement containing bitter criticism of Government but that Rajagopalachari dissuaded him from publishing it. It is also said that Gandhi stated to Syama Prasad Mukerjee that he had no faith in the Pakistan scheme and that his endorsement of Rajagopalachari's formula is only a matter of expediency. A further report is that Gandhi has no hope of a successful outcome of the discussions with Jinnah but that his objective is to place both Government and Jinnah in the wrong in the eyes of the world.

It seems clear that Syama Prasad Mukerjee put his case very strongly to Gandhi and did not mince matters. The former is a most determined character who will stick at nothing and I should say that he will get a good deal of support from many Congressmen, especially in Bengal. One report states that he reminded Gandhi that he had said on one occasion that the indivisibility of India is his God and 'vivisect me before you vivisect India'. Meanwhile, Gandhi has befogged matters further by his statement to a correspondent of the London *Daily Worker* that the 'perpetual vivisection of India', referred to in connection with the Cripps offer, means only one thing, i.e. the division of India into Princely India and Democratic India. This seems to be a highly disingenuous explanation if the report is correct.

Gandhi's instructions about the observance of 9th August day at Bombay show that he still considers himself to be above the law.

We shall presumably know the result of the Gandhi–Jinnah meeting before the Governors' Conference when perhaps Gandhi's position may be elucidated further. What one would like to know is what the Working Committee think of Gandhi's approval of the Rajagopalachari formula.

641

War Cabinet

India Committee. I (44) 3rd Meeting

L/PO/6/110: ff 107–10

Those present at this meeting held in the Lord President's Room, Great George Street, S.W.1, on 11 August 1944 at 3.30 pm were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Sir John Anderson, Mr Amery, Sir S. Cripps, Mr Butler; and Sir Edward Bridges and Sir Gilbert Laithwaite (Secretariat)

The Committee had before them—

(i) The Viceroy's telegrams of 10th August, Nos. 1546–S[1] and 1547–S,[2] representing that he felt difficulty in accepting the draft reply to Mr. Gandhi approved by the War Cabinet (W.M. (44) 102nd Conclusions, Minute 1)[3] and contained in the Secretary of State for India's telegram of 5th August, No. 17258[4] and suggesting an alternative version.

(ii) A telegram from Washington to the Foreign Office, No. 4259,[5] suggesting certain rearrangements of the draft which had been approved by the War Cabinet.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that the Viceroy's telegrams set out fully the difficulties he felt about the draft approved by the Cabinet. There was no question as to the importance of approach in dealing with Indians, and the Viceroy clearly was not satisfied that the Cabinet draft was satisfactory from that point of view. At the same time the difference was one of approach rather than of principle. He suggested that, subject possibly to certain further drafting alterations, the redraft now proposed by the Viceroy would meet the case. It had the advantage of leaving less room for rejoinder. There was a good deal to be said for avoiding an analysis of the basis of the Cripps offer and leaving the policy of His Majesty's Government to be judged from his (the Secretary of State's) speech in the House of Commons on 28th July last.[6]

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION said that the telegram to which the Viceroy was now replying was the outcome of discussion in full Cabinet at which, however, he, the Lord President and the Minister of Education had not been present. The draft approved by the War Cabinet represented a considered view and a deliberate decision that the reply to Mr Gandhi should be in firm and uncompromising terms. The Viceroy was now anxious to go back to the general lines of his original draft which, after full consideration, had been decisively rejected by the Cabinet. It was arguable no doubt that the right line to take in this matter was that the Viceroy was the best judge, and that we should go ahead, taking the consequences of error if he made a mistake. But that had not been the view of the Cabinet. He felt that we must either leave the decision in the matter to the Viceroy or instruct him specifically as to the terms of his reply. It was impossible to deal with these matters by lengthy negotiation by telegram. He did not feel that a compromise under which a part, but not all, of the Viceroy's redraft would be accepted, would be satisfactory.

The matter was clearly one that could not be finally decided without further reference to the War Cabinet.

[1] No. 636. [2] No. 637. [3] No. 629. [4] No. 632. [5] No. 633.
[6] See No. 615, note 1.

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION said that he had not been present at the discussion in Cabinet on 4th August. He regarded this correspondence as a very unsatisfactory method of negotiation. Indian politicians could be relied upon to pull to pieces any statement we made to them, however carefully drafted, and to that extent the Viceroy was justified in his representations. He himself felt, however, that there were strong objections to any negotiation such as the Viceroy had become involved in. Mr Gandhi had just been advocating symbolic disobedience at Bombay; this was the worst moment at which to negotiate with him. Was it necessary to send any reply? The initiative that had been taken was bad in moment, method and content. At some stage we should have to resume political negotiation with Indian leaders, but the correspondence now proceeding was well calculated to do harm all round. If it were to go no further, so much the better.

The general sense of the meeting was that, despite the arguments advanced by the Minister of Education, it would not be possible, for the reasons considered in the Cabinet on 4th August, to avoid some answer to Mr Gandhi from the Viceroy and that, given the importance of formal politeness and the fact that the Viceroy had invited Mr Gandhi to put forward a definite and constructive policy in his letter of 22nd July[7] (Appendix I to W.P. (44) 426)[8] the answer should come from the Viceroy himself.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER felt that the initial mistake, if there was one, had been in encouraging Mr Gandhi to come forward with these proposals. Balancing the arguments on both sides, he would himself, however, were the Committee free to do so, be prepared to accept the Viceroy's rearrangement, subject however to the retention of paragraph 3 restating the Cripps offer, which the Viceroy was anxious to remove. The Committee would remember that the Cabinet had taken a very strong view at their meeting on 4th August, when it had been urged that Mr Gandhi had secured release from prison by deceitful methods, that his record was that of a traitor, and that it was most undesirable to take seriously propositions put forward by him which could be represented as being outrageous in character.

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION urged that it was all the more desirable to avoid playing Gandhi's game. Surely the wise course would be to try to guide both parties out of this impasse and finally dispose of the invitation to correspondence which was represented by the Viceroy's letter of 22nd July. If, in fact, a serious negotiation was in view, it ought to be very differently handled.

THE MINISTER OF AIRCRAFT PRODUCTION supported the Minister of Education's view. A way out might be, if the Cabinet approved, that the Viceroy should reply to Mr Gandhi that he could not consider Mr Gandhi's

proposals as constructive in view of the well-known attitude taken up by His Majesty's Government, to which they adhered. This would represent a polite but curt dismissal of the whole matter, and would indeed be a reply which the Viceroy could in the first instance have sent, he thought, without consulting His Majesty's Government at all. It was important, in his judgment, to relate any reply to the terms of Mr Gandhi's letter of 27th July[9] to the Viceroy.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER agreed but suggested that instead of using the phrase "constructive", the Viceroy should say "I cannot regard the proposals put forward in your letter of the 27th July as satisfying those conditions". He drew attention to the subtlety of the reference which Mr Gandhi had made in his letter of 27th July to the financial issue. Any redraft of the telegram to which the Viceroy now took exception could only be considered at a full meeting of the War Cabinet, such as the meeting which had settled the draft. If the Viceroy felt there was difficulty in those circumstances about sending a reply in those terms, then the only possible alternative was to send a very short reply on the lines proposed by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Aircraft Production.

After further discussion, the Committee:—

(1) Suggested the drafts[10] of a personal telegram to the Viceroy and of a telegram containing a very short alternative reply to be sent by the Viceroy to Mr. Gandhi. Copies are appended to this record.

(2) Invited the Secretary of State for India to bring the matter forward for consideration at the next meeting of the War Cabinet on Monday, 14th August, together with any comment that might by then have been received from the Viceroy on this suggestion.

[7] No. 597. [8] No. 620. [9] See No. 614.
[10] These drafts were the same as Nos. 642 and 643.

642

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: ff 92–3

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 August 1944, 10.55 pm*
PRIVATE
SECRET

17796. Your 1546–S[1] and 1547–S[2] about suggested redraft of reply to Gandhi.

The draft approved and contained in my 17258[3] of the 5th August was the result of prolonged consideration by a meeting[4] of the War Cabinet presided

[1] No. 636. [2] No. 637. [3] No. 632. [4] See No. 629.

over by the Prime Minister. Several other Ministers who attended the meeting and held strong views on the matter, are not now available for immediate consultation.

India Committee and the Ministers available have given fullest consideration to the views set out in your telegram 1546–S. But until the full War Cabinet can be re-assembled, which cannot be for several days, it is clearly impracticable to reconsider the draft then approved.

If, therefore, you still feel strong objection to the draft contained in 17258, the only alternative appears to be that you should send a very short reply in the terms suggested in my immediately following telegram. I am proposing to make this suggestion to the War Cabinet at their meeting on Monday, but I am sending you this at once in order that you may know the position.

643

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 90

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 August 1944, 9.45 pm*
SECRET

17797. Following is text of redraft referred to in my immediately preceding telegram.

Begins. Thank you for your letter of 27th July.[1] In my letter to you of 22nd July[2] I stated that if you would submit to me a definite and constructive policy I should be glad to consider it.

Having regard to the definite statements already made by His Majesty's Government of their policy to which they adhere, I cannot regard the proposals put forward in your letter of the 27th July as satisfying this condition. *Ends.*

[1] See No. 614. [2] No. 597.

644

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 99

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *11 August 1944, 11.45 pm*

6–U. My most immediate telegrams of today's date regarding Gandhi. Trouble is that Cabinet are extremely unlikely to come to any conclusion with regard to your alternative[1] without reference to Prime Minister now in Italy who is

almost certain to be adverse even if Cabinet urged reconsideration and whole matter might be held up for fortnight or more. On the other hand the short answer suggested is one which Attlee and India Committee are prepared to urge Cabinet to sanction without further reference to Prime Minister. It may be curt but it is not provocative and leaves minimum opening for argument.

[1] See No. 637.

645

Mr Eden to Mr Amery

L/E/9/1525: f 691

SECRET FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.I, *11 August 1944*

My dear Leo,

Thank you for your letter of the 2nd August,[1] enclosing a copy of the Viceroy's telegram[2] about India's status in the proposed World Organisation. There was, of course, no doubt in our minds about India's eligibility for membership of the new World Organisation, for the reasons given by the Viceroy in his telegram. Membership of the World Organisation is nowhere in our draft expressly *limited* to "independent states". Our use of this phrase and of the expression "sovereign equality" was by way of general reference to the principles which were agreed at the Moscow Conference.[3] The governing sentence in our draft is that which proposes (paragraph 20) that *all* the United Nations, including, of course, India, should be invited to be members of the new organisation.

The United States draft leaves the point in no shadow of doubt, laying it down that "The United Nations . . . should comprise the initial membership of the organisations". According to the American plan there should be a General Assembly "comprised of representatives of the States members of the international organisation". As India has been accepted as an United Nation, she would automatically be admitted to membership of the Assembly, and, if she can secure the necessary votes, of the Council. Whether we shall be able to re-introduce the old League of Nations convention whereby one member of the Commonwealth, other than the United Kingdom, was represented on the Council, is naturally open to doubt in view of the smaller Council which is now contemplated; but it is not a point which our representatives at Washington are likely to overlook. The possibility that India might rotate with the other Dominions as a British Dominion representative is another, and primarily

[1] No. 621. [2] No. 611.

[3] Of Allied Foreign Secretaries held from 19 October–1 November 1943.

inter-Imperial, question, in which foreign Governments have a less direct interest.

Cadogan and Jebb both saw your letter before they left for Washington. I am, however, sending Cadogan copies of this correspondence[4] so that he may have something in writing to go upon, if the status of India comes up in the course of discussion.

I am also sending a copy to the Lord President.

Yours,

ANTHONY EDEN

[4] Mr Amery also informed H.M. Ambassador, Washington of the gist of the correspondence in his tel. 18120 of 17 August. L/E/9/1525.

646

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/P&J/8/519: f 88

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *12 August 1944, 12.40 pm*
Received: 12 August, 10.15 am

No. 1560–S. Your telegram 17796[1] of August 11th. Gandhi. I still feel strong objection to War Cabinet's draft[2] and consider alternative in your 17797[3] quite unsuitable.

2. According to Press reports Gandhi meets Jinnah on August 16th. It is most desirable that reply should be delivered to (? Gandhi) and published on 16th or at least before discussion between him and Jinnah ends.

3. Gandhi's letter was addressed to me and I consider I am entitled to reply in my own words (? provided) I keep within War Cabinet's policy and instructions[4] given me before I left for India. Re-draft in my 1547–S[5] satisfies these conditions and accords in principle and intentions with draft decided on recently by the Cabinet. I must press you to secure War Cabinet approval to it on Monday August 14th.[6]

[1] No. 642. [2] See No. 632. [3] No. 643. [4] Enclosure to No. 172. [5] No. 637.

[6] Sir E. Bridges sent the text of this tel. to Mr Churchill in Italy in tel. Clasp 20 of 12 August. Earlier on 12 August, he had sent Mr Churchill a minute by air courier in which he summarised developments since the Cabinet meeting of 4 August (see No. 630) and attached copies of Nos. 632, 636, 637, 642 and 643. L/PO/6/110 and R/30/1/4.

647

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 85

MOST IMMEDIATE *12 August 1944*

7–U. Your U–6[1] of August 11th. See my telegram 1560–S of to-day. I feel strongly on this matter and as controversy concerns not substance but only form and (three corrupt groups) of reply to Gandhi I cannot understand why War Cabinet should not approve my revised draft on Monday. I suggest you put this to Attlee. Unless War Cabinet has any objection of substance to urge I propose to issue my revised draft and (omission) Winston's displeasure.

[1] No. 644.

648

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 87

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *12 August 1944, 2.30 pm*

PRIVATE

668. Your telegram No. 1560–S[1] dated 12th Aug. Gandhi. Will do my utmost with Cabinet Monday evening which should just give us time. I need not say that I entirely agree with you over this silly business.

[1] No. 646.

649

War Cabinet Paper W.P. (44) 441

L/PO/6/110: f 94

INDIA

VICEROY'S PROPOSED REPLY TO GANDHI

INDIA OFFICE, *12 August 1944*

I attach for the information of my colleagues copies of telegrams[1] received from the Viceroy (Appendices I and II), in reply to my telegram No. 17258[2] dated the 5th August containing the Cabinet's redraft of the reply to Gandhi,

[1] Nos. 636 and 637. [2] No. 632.

and also copies of telegrams[3] despatched to him (Appendices III and IV) on the 11th August after his redraft had been considered by the India Committee.

L. S. A.

[3] Nos. 642 and 643.

650

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Sir A. Hope (Madras) (Extract)[1]

Wavell Papers. Official Correspondence: India, October 1943–December 1944, p 308

No. 40 *12 August 1944*

5. I have still to answer a letter from Gandhi, dated July 27th[2] in which he made what he described as a constructive suggestion. This was that power should be handed over to a "National Government" selected by the Assembly with no reservation of the Governor-General's veto, except in respect of military operations during the war, which would be reserved to the Governor-General and the Commander-in-Chief. This is more or less the claim that the Congress made in 1942 during the Cripps negotiations and cannot possibly be accepted as a basis for discussion. I hope to be able to let him have an answer agreed with His Majesty's Government in a few days, but we can hardly go further than to turn down the present suggestion, and repeat the assurance that any really constructive suggestion will be examined sympathetically. The real position since the Cripps negotiations is that we, the British, have nothing further to offer. We have gone the limit in the Cripps draft and any further "concessions" can only be at the expense of the minorities or the Princes.

[1] Only this extract is in Wavell Papers. [2] See No. 614.

651

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 79

MOST IMMEDIATE NEW DELHI, *13 August 1944, 1.25 pm*
PRIVATE
SECRET

1562–S. Your private telegram No. 668[1] of 12th August. Gandhi. Many thanks. Should you need further ammunition for Attlee or War Cabinet I suggest you tell them that newspapers here have for the past two days[2] observed truce from recriminations likely to prejudice Gandhi–Jinnah talks. Reply from me to

Gandhi which could be interpreted as discourteous or obstructive would have most unfortunate effect and would give Gandhi and Jinnah excuse (a) for attributing failure of talks (if they do fail) to obstruction by His Majesty's Government *or* (b) for entering into temporary alliance with the object of embarrassing His Majesty's Government. Censorship intercept from Bhulabhai Desai to Liaquat Ali shows that (b) is already in the minds of some Congressmen. It is therefore essential to give the impression that we want to make progress and hope the talks will succeed.

[1] No. 648.

[2] Wavell Papers, Private Correspondence: Secretary of State, 1943–6 have 'past few days'.

652

Mr Churchill to Sir E. Bridges (via Allied Forces Headquarters, Italy and Air Ministry)

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 78

EMERGENCY

13 August 1944, 11.30 pm
Received: 14 August, 5.20 am

CHAIN No. 28. Guard. Prime Minister to Sir Edward Bridges for Deputy Prime Minister, War Cabinet and others concerned.

I entirely approve of short answer Number 17797.[1] I hope the Cabinet will stand firm and not be disturbed by the attitude of the Viceroy. He thinks that because Gandhi wrote a letter to him he is entitled to reply in terms which do not commend themselves to the War Cabinet. As a matter of fact he has no right to negotiate with Gandhi at all, considering he was responsible for passing to us the medical opinion on which we were told that he would never be able to take part in politics again.

2. The root of the matter is that after what Wavell said about Gandhi's state of health he has no right to enter upon correspondence with him which cannot fail to wear the aspect of a great parley between the Viceroy and newly released invalid. Let him have the short telegram which is perfectly sensible and simple.

[1] No. 643.

653

War Cabinet W.M. (44) 105th Conclusions

R/30/1/4: ff 8–10

Those present at this meeting held in the Cabinet War Room on 14 August 1944 at 4.30 pm were: Mr Attlee (in the Chair), Mr Anthony Eden, Sir John Anderson

Also present were: Mr Amery, Sir James Grigg, Sir Archibald Sinclair, Sir Stafford Cripps, Mr R. A. Butler.

INDIA

Gandhi

(Previous Reference: W.M. (44) 102nd Conclusions, Minute 1)[1]

At their meeting on the 4th August the War Cabinet had approved the terms of a draft reply to be sent by the Viceroy to Gandhi. This telegram had been despatched to the Viceroy as No. 17258[2] of the 5th August.

The War Cabinet now had before them a memorandum by the Secretary of State for India (W.P. (44) 441),[3] to which were attached two further telegrams from the Viceroy. The first of these telegrams (No. 1546–S)[4] raised certain objections to the draft approved by the War Cabinet, while the second (No. 1547–S)[5] contained a further suggested redraft of the reply to Gandhi.

These telegrams had been considered on the 12th August[6] by the India Committee, who had taken the view that, if the Viceroy still saw strong objection to the draft contained in No. 17258, the only alternative appeared to be that he should send a very short reply, the terms of which were suggested in telegram No. 17797[7] (Appendix IV to W.P. (44) 441).

The War Cabinet also had before them a further telegram from the Viceroy, dated the 12th August (No. 1560–S),[8] in reply thereto, raising objections to the shorter draft, and again urging that his own suggested redraft (No. 1547–S) should be approved.

The War Cabinet also had before them a telegram[9] from the Prime Minister approving the proposed short reply (No. 17797).

(i) The first point dealt with in discussion was the Viceroy's suggested further redraft (No. 1547–S).

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA said that, in his view, no issue of policy was raised by this redraft which was in line with War Cabinet policy. Since the only difference was one of wording, he thought that the considered judgment of the man on the spot should be accepted.

On the other hand, the general view of the War Cabinet was that the difference was not entirely one of wording. The draft contained in telegram No. 17258 had been the result of prolonged consideration by the War Cabinet when

a decision had been deliberately taken to stiffen the tone. Several members of the War Cabinet who had held strong views on the matter were not now available for immediate consultation. In these circumstances there could be no question of accepting the Viceroy's further suggested redraft.

(ii) The next point dealt with was choice between the draft approved by the War Cabinet and despatched as telegram No. 17258 and the alternative shorter version proposed by the Indian Committee (telegram No. 17797).

THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION favoured adoption of the shorter draft. In his view the present moment was not a good one for presenting the Indian leaders with a lengthy document on which they would comment in detail. The Prime Minister had also expressed strong approval of the short telegram.

On the other hand, the view was strongly expressed that the longer telegram approved by the War Cabinet would almost certainly be preferred by the Viceroy; and, moreover, that there was considerable advantage in putting on record the points set out in the longer answer.

(iii) The question was raised whether it would be possible to send no reply until the outcome of the Gandhi–Jinnah conversations were known. It was pointed out that the Viceroy had stressed the importance of Gandhi receiving a reply before his meeting with Jinnah. Moreover, the Viceroy had asked[10] Gandhi to make a proposition and had received his letter on [of] the 27th July,[11] and a prolonged delay would put him in the wrong, and might create an impression that Gandhi's offer merited careful consideration.

(iv) The view of the War Cabinet was thus that the Viceroy should have the option between the longer and shorter replies proposed by the War Cabinet. It was felt, however, that he should be given an explanation of the reasons which had weighed with the War Cabinet when authorising the form of reply despatched to the Viceroy in telegram No. 17258.

(v) In this connection THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS felt that international and not only Indian opinion had to be borne in mind. It was of great importance that paragraph 3 of the War Cabinet's redraft (No. 17258) should be retained as setting out our case to the world. He did not feel that the Viceroy's redraft was acceptable.

(vi) THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER favoured recapitulation of the main features of the Cripps offer, which Gandhi's letter deliberately ignored. It was important to bring out also that there would be no change in the constitutional position during the war. The Viceroy's answer suggested that he was more concerned with the present constitutional position than with adhering to the essentials of the Cripps offer, including the keeping of faith with the

[1] No. 629. [2] No. 632. [3] No. 649. [4] No. 636. [5] No. 637.
[6] No. 641; the date should be 11 August. [7] No. 643. [8] No. 646. [9] No. 652.
[10] No. 597. [11] See No. 614.

minorities, the depressed classes and the princes. Our duty to India compelled us to bring out that those were terms which must be accepted as the necessary condition of any advance at all.

(vii) The War Cabinet agreed to the following amendment to the longer draft approved by them on the 4th August, viz.:—

(*a*) That paragraph 2 of the redraft in telegram No. 17258 of the 5th August should be amended to read as follows:—

"His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. But proposals such as those put forward by you, &c. . . ." as in the draft;

(*b*) That consequentially paragraph 5 of the same draft should be amended to read—

"It is clear in these circumstances that no purpose would be served by discussion on the basis which you suggest. If, however, the leaders of, &c. . . ."

The War Cabinet conclusions were as follows:—

(1) The Viceroy should be invited to send to Gandhi either the longer draft approved by the War Cabinet (telegram No. 17258) subject to the amendment proposed above, or the shorter draft (No. 17797).

(2) A further telegram should be sent to him, giving an explanation of the reasons which had weighed with the War Cabinet in preferring their longer draft to the draft proposed by the Viceroy.

Draft telegrams[12] on these lines were prepared and, after an adjournment, were approved. Copies are appended to this record.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA wished his dissent to be recorded on the ground that on a matter, not of broad policy, but of wording and tone, the earnest and repeatedly expressed opinion of the Viceroy, in touch with the whole Indian situation, should not be overridden.

[12] These drafts are the same as Nos. 655 and 656.

654

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 61

INDIA OFFICE, *14 August 1944*

7–U. Three telegrams follow, one in U cypher and two from Cabinet. Please take no action on latter before seeing my No. 8–U telegram.

655

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: ff 63–4

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *14 August 1944, 11.15 pm*
SECRET

17968. 1. Your telegram of 12th August, 1560–S.[1]

2. Cabinet have again considered[2] the question with full understanding of points you have put to them. I have already explained[3] difficulty they feel in any substantial revision of draft contained in my telegram in absence of Ministers who were present when it was prepared. These objections are still, in their view, decisive. They must therefore ask that reply to Gandhi should be either in terms of draft contained in my 17258[4] of 5th August, subject to amendments in paragraph 3 below or in terms of alternative draft contained in my 17797[5] of 11th August, and they leave choice as between these two drafts to you. Reasons which weighed with them in preferring draft in my 17258 to draft proposed by you are contained in my immediately following telegram.

3. Should you decide in favour of longer draft as against short draft, they propose following amendment to meet point taken by you.

[*There follows the amendment approved in No. 653 para. (vii) (a) and (b).*]

[1] No. 646. [2] See No. 653. [3] No. 642. [4] No. 632. [5] No. 643.

656

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: ff 65–6

MOST IMMEDIATE INDIA OFFICE, *14 August 1944, 10.20 pm*
SECRET

17969. My immediately preceding telegram. Cabinet are anxious that you should realise that fullest consideration has been given to your proposals. They differ from you with reluctance and only because of their strong sense of importance of the issue. Drafting amendments suggested in my immediately preceding telegram meet a point you have raised. They wish you to know that the following were the reasons for their decision in favour of the longer draft in my 17258[1] in particular of the inclusion of paragraph 3.

[1] No. 632.

(1) They see in Gandhi's letter[2] a deliberate attempt to ignore essentials of the very generous offer made on their behalf by Cripps. They regard it as their duty to themselves and to India to restate those essentials, and to make it clear that they must be accepted as the necessary condition of any advance.

(2) In particular they think it necessary to bring out their responsibility for fulfilling their obligations to minorities, depressed classes and States.

(3) They feel that it would be very dangerous to allow Gandhi's reference to finance to go unchallenged. He is quite capable of claiming afterwards that silence represents acquiescence on our part in his proposals.

(4) While most anxious to be conciliatory and polite, reaction on other elements in India and on world opinion cannot be overlooked. As regards India Gandhi has not withdrawn policy which resulted in his imprisonment, and he has just again advocated symbolic civil disobedience. Proposals he has put to you are outrageous in character. Minorities and States will be watching our reply. While polite we must be firm and Cabinet feel that their longer draft does not at all go too far.

(5) Finally, reactions on international opinion are of great concern to them. Foreign Secretary feels, and Cabinet agrees, that those reactions make it essential to restate their case fully and firmly and to leave no room for any suggestion that we are moving from position we have taken up or, on the other hand, adopting a weak line with Gandhi. It is for that reason that they have thought it necessary to stiffen the tone of the proposed reply. They feel sure that you will appreciate the need of this from the broad point of view to which Cabinet have to give weight.

[2] See No. 614.

657

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

Telegram, L/PO/6/110: f 62

INDIA OFFICE, *14 August 1944*

8–U. I did my best but the most I could secure was the amendment of paragraph 2 striking a more conciliatory note at the outset. The reasons for the Cabinet's decision in telegrams 17968 and 17969 may not have convinced either of us that their wording is better than your redraft but they are at any rate not without substance and are strongly felt. In any case I would earnestly urge you to accept and not take the action you suggest in your 7–U.[1] These differences

of wording are not sufficient ground for a head-on collision which would only be justified on a major issue of policy and one on which we should both have to see it through to the end.

[1] No. 647.

658

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

Telegram, L/PO/10/25

MOST IMMEDIATE
SECRET

NEW DELHI, *15 August 1944, 5.30 pm*
Received: 15 August, 3.00 pm

No. 1568–S. Your telegrams No. 17968[1] and No. 17969[2] of 14th August. Gandhi. I am issuing longer draft with modifications proposed and omission in paragraph four of words "The invasion peril is removed and". These words add nothing to the sense, and it can be argued now that invasion peril has been removed.

2. Letter will probably be delivered to Gandhi on 17th August. Will telegraph later date and time of Press release.[3]

[1] No. 655. [2] No. 656.
[3] In tel. 1579–S of 17 August, Lord Wavell informed Mr Amery that the correspondence was to be published at midnight G.M.T. 17–18 August. L/P&J/8/519.

659

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Gandhi

Wavell Papers. Political Series, April 1944–July 1945, Pt. I, pp 40–2

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *15 August 1944*

Dear Mr Gandhi,

Thank you for your letter of 27th July.[1] Your proposals are—

(i) that you should undertake to advise the Working Committee (*a*) "that in view of changed conditions mass Civil Disobedience envisaged by the resolution of August 1942 cannot be offered", and (*b*) "that full co-operation in the war effort should be given by Congress" provided

(ii) that His Majesty's Government (*a*) declare immediate Indian Independence, and (*b*) form a "National Government" responsible to the Central Assembly, "subject to the proviso that, during the pendency of the war

[1] See No. 614.

the military operations should continue as at present but without involving any financial burden on India".

2. His Majesty's Government remain most anxious that a settlement of the Indian problem should be reached. But proposals such as those put forward by you are quite unacceptable to His Majesty's Government as a basis for discussion, and you must realise this if you have read Mr Amery's statement in the House of Commons on July 28th[2] last. They are indeed very similar to the proposals made by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad to Sir Stafford Cripps in April 1942[3] and His Majesty's Government's reasons for rejecting them are the same as they were then.

3. Without recapitulating all these reasons in detail I should remind you that His Majesty's Government at that time made it clear—

(*a*) that their offer of unqualified freedom after the cessation of hostilities was made conditional upon the framing of a constitution agreed by the main elements of India's national life and the negotiation of the necessary Treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government;

(*b*) that it is impossible during the period of hostilities to bring about any change in the constitution, by which means alone a "National Government", such as you suggest, could be made responsible to the Central Assembly.

The object of these conditions was to ensure the fulfilment of their duty to safeguard the interests of the racial and religious minorities and of the depressed classes, and their treaty obligations to the Indian States.

4. It was upon the above conditions that His Majesty's Government invited Indian leaders to take part in an interim Government which would operate under the existing constitution. I must make it quite clear that until the war is over, responsibility for defence and military operations cannot be divided from the other responsibilities of Government, and that until hostilities cease and the new constitution is in operation, His Majesty's Government and the Governor-General must retain their responsibility over the entire field. So far as the question of India's share of the cost of the war is concerned, this is essentially a matter for settlement between His Majesty's Government on the one hand and the Government of India on the other, and existing financial arrangements can only be reopened at the instance of one or the other.

5. It is clear in these circumstances that no purpose would be served by discussion on the basis which you suggest. If however the leaders of the Hindus, the Muslims and the important minorities were willing to co-operate in a transitional government established and working within the present constitution, I believe good progress might be made. For such a transitional government to succeed there must before it is formed be agreement in principle

between Hindus and Muslims and all important elements as to the method by which the new constitution should be framed. This agreement is a matter for Indians themselves. Until Indian leaders have come closer together than they are now I doubt if I myself can do anything to help. Let me remind you too that minority problems are not easy. They are real and can be solved only by mutual compromise and tolerance.

6. The period after the termination of hostilities for which the transitional government would last would depend on the speed with which the new constitution could be framed. I see no reason why preliminary work on that constitution should not begin as soon as the Indian leaders are prepared to co-operate to that end. If they can arrive at a genuine agreement as to the method of framing the constitution no unnecessary time need be spent after the war in reaching final conclusions and in agreeing Treaty arrangements with His Majesty's Government. There again the primary responsibility rests on the Indian leaders.

Yours sincerely,
WAVELL

[2] See No. 615, note 1. [3] See No. 615, note 2.

660

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *15 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 1st August.[1] The approaching discussion between Gandhi and Jinnah, which is announced for 19th August in Bombay, is giving rise to much speculation. There has for the past few days been a truce in the Press from recriminations likely to prejudice a settlement. But Hindu objections to the Rajagopalachari formula are still strong. Most educated Hindus dislike the Pakistan idea intensely and find it difficult to forgive Gandhi for going back on his earlier statements about it. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and others have been in touch with Gandhi since he returned to Sevagram, and Mookerjee is reported to have said that he left much encouraged—a statement which the Muslims find disquieting. Jinnah has reverted to his proposal for some kind of special autonomy for the Sikhs within Pakistan; but the Sikhs did not like this before and there is no reason to suppose that they will like it now. I am told that

[1] No. 618.

Tej Bahadur Sapru attempted to advise Gandhi the other day, and took the line that he must base himself on the 1935 Constitution and the Cripps offer. If he failed to do so, Jinnah would be free to range over the entire field of constitutional possibilities and would make most extravagant demands. Gandhi said that these were most complicated matters which Sapru must leave him to consider in his own way. Sapru is said to have left Sevagram in a very bad temper. I am sure that Gandhi's real object is to get the Working Committee out of detention and that he will go a very long way (with the usual mental reservations) in dealing with Jinnah to secure the co-operation of the Muslim League. Having drafted an agreement of some kind he may tell Jinnah that he is at a disadvantage because the Working Committee, who alone can commit the Congress, are in detention, and may suggest a joint approach to the Viceroy to secure their release. Gandhi would of course be acting only in his personal capacity and would, as usual, keep various lines of retreat open. I think it unlikely that Jinnah will rise to this fly, but it is possible that he may do so. Bhulabhai Desai recently wrote to Liaqat Ali Khan suggesting not a constitutional settlement but an alliance between the Congress and the League for the duration of the war.

2. Some publicity has been given in the newspapers here to a message by 41 men of the R.A.F. urging the solution of the Indian deadlock. I got the impression that the message was from R.A.F. men serving in India, but in fact it seems to have been a letter to the *Daily Worker* in England. It is irregular for members of the Fighting Services to express political opinions, and I suggest that you find out exactly what the message was and how it came to be published. References to it might well have been stopped in censorship either at your end or here.

(*16th August.*—I have just seen a telegram[2] to Joyce from Sen, which shows that the text of the letter was stopped in censorship here.)

3. Jogendra Singh told me a few days ago that he wished to write a personal letter to Gandhi. I asked to see his draft, which was a plea for the unity of India and referred to the deterioration in the Public Services since constitutional reform began, and to the risk of further deterioration if we tried to move too fast. Jogendra Singh's idea is much the same as that stated in paragraph 5 of your letter. He would like to build on the Act of 1935, and mentioned this in his draft to Gandhi. He thinks that certain modifications in the Act would be needed (he is particularly anxious to secure better representation for landlords and others with a stake in the country), and that if the modified Act worked reasonably well the Legislatures constituted under it could, after a stated period of, say, five years, form a Constituent Assembly to frame an entirely new Constitution. I asked Jogendra Singh not to send Gandhi his letter; it was harmless enough, but Gandhi might make embarrassing use of advice from Members of the Government.

4. I am examining with my Reforms Commissioner paragraphs 5 to 7 of your letter and may be able to let you have an opinion next week. I am told that the three main possibilities—the exclusion of the States, a reduction in the number of States required for Federation, and a modification of the obligations which the States must undertake in order to federate—are all less simple than they seem at first sight.

5. I have just dealt with your telegrams[3] giving the War Cabinet's final decision about my reply to Gandhi's letter of 27th July.[4] I think very little of their draft even as modified, but have agreed to issue it omitting the reference in paragraph 4 to the removal of the threat of invasion, which adds nothing to the sense and might, in view of our recent successes, lead to unprofitable argument. I am grateful to you for the background information you have given me and agree that this occasion is not one for a head-on collision. But I feel that many of our troubles in India, both administrative and political, are due to ignorance and prejudice among your colleagues. It is discouraging work to serve an obviously hostile Cabinet, who seem to have no confidence at all in my judgment on any matter. They have now turned down my recommendations for (*a*) Indian Finance Minister; (*b*) Section 93 in Bengal at the beginning of this year; (*c*) Bajpai's status; (*d*) the form of my reply to Mr Gandhi; and (*e*) my requests for food imports, of which only my very great persistence has produced an inadequate amount. I know how much trouble and unpleasantness all these matters have caused you, and am very grateful indeed for your unfailing support.

6. The food situation is generally unchanged, but procurement in the United Provinces is so slow that Hallett's Government has had to ask for emergency help from the Food Department. The monsoon is reasonably satisfactory on the whole, but damage is reported both from excessive rain and from drought. I have already told you[5] that a serious shortage is expected in Travancore and Cochin.

Woodhead's Committee has begun to take evidence in Calcutta. The protests about the hearing of witnesses *in camera* seem to have died down.

French and his Secretary have arrived and are staying with me for a day or two.

7. When I saw Casey in Calcutta on my way to Assam he discussed with me again his proposed Committee to enquire into administration in Bengal. He said he could not understand your objection[6] that his enquiry would overlap seriously with the work of the Woodhead and Bhore Committees. What he contemplated was an enquiry going in great detail into district organisation and connected matters, and dealing in particular with the relations between

[2] L/I/1/1087. [3] Nos. 654–7. [4] See No. 614. [5] No. 639, para. 3.
[6] See No. 580.

District Officers and the staffs of the specialised departments (Medical, Public Health, Co-operative Societies, and so on). He did not much like any of the Chairmen you suggested, and though he was anxious to get two good officials of the Indian Civil Service to serve as members, he was determined to find a Chairman not brought up in Indian ways and new to the problems of Bengal. Rowlands told me some time ago that he had too little to do and was getting restive. I suggested to Casey that Rowlands would be an admirable Chairman if he could find the time, and if it was clearly understood that he might have to leave some of the details to his colleagues. Casey asked me to sound Rowlands without committing myself, and on my return to New Delhi I had this done. Rowlands was not enthusiastic, but said that if Casey and I thought him the best person for Chairman, he would be prepared to serve. He pointed out that the proposal would have to be referred to the Home authorities; that it would probably be useful for him to spend a fortnight or so in London to refresh his memory of the latest developments in Civil Service organisation and training there; and that if he became Chairman, he would have to leave his Deputy, Smith, in charge of the current duties here and be free to leave the Committee if he were needed for the discussion of war problems at a high level. I have informed Casey of Rowlands' views, and if Casey wants him, will telegraph to you. I think Casey is right about the scope of his enquiry. He wants to go into far more detail than will be necessary for the Woodhead and Bhore Committees, and to consider the functions not only of the All-India and Class I Provincial Services but of the lower Services and the clerical staffs as well.

8. I presided a few days ago at a rather difficult discussion on our attitude to the revised demands of the Central Provision Office and connected matters. The departmental draft approved by the Members concerned began with a mass of figures and went on to a general statement of our economic troubles. It came to the conclusion that we could not accept any commitments over and above the level of the original commitments for 1944, and sought to transfer the responsibility for the decision of His Majesty's Government. It was to have been accompanied by a private telegram from me drafted by the Finance Member which gave some background material not included in the official draft. Rowlands did not like the official draft at all. His view is that as long as the war goes well and we hold the food situation, the inflationary danger is far less than our experts suppose. On these economic matters it is impossible to prove or disprove anything; but on the whole, I think the Finance Department here is more likely to be right than Rowlands. Our difficulties about food, coal and transportation show how severely our physical resources are strained. After hearing all concerned I decided that the War Department should despatch their figures in a departmental telegram[7] and that I would draft a separate official telegram[8] of my own giving the background, and asking His Majesty's

Government to make sure that they reduce their demands to an absolute minimum, and to support our food position, on which everything else depends. I think my telegram was an improvement on the original draft though I realise that His Majesty's Government may not like it.

[Para. 9, on reactions to the report on the Bombay explosions; and para. 10, on broadcasts for prisoners of war in Japanese hands, omitted.]

11. Can you tell me why the Cabinet decided[9] to postpone the consideration of Bajpai's status for six months? If there is a good case for making him a Minister—as I think there is—the sooner we do it the better. If there is not, I do not see that a delay of six months will make much difference.

[Para. 12, on the selection of a Financial Adviser for Saudi Arabia; para. 13, on the proposed visit by the King of Nepal to India; para. 14, on Sir D. Pilditch's successor; para. 15, on the shortage of trained nurses; and para. 16, on Sir G. Cunningham's extension, omitted.]

17. As you know I have the Governors' Conference on the last three days of this month. If the political situation permits, I propose to go to Simla on the 2nd September, returning about the 14th. I shall then see Bhopal and his deputation on the 15th. I have no tours planned for October, but hope to visit the Punjab, the North-West Frontier, and possibly Baluchistan in November.

18. I am still getting evidence that Muslims are very anxious that there should be permission for the *Haj* this year; and that failure by His Majesty's Government to provide ships and escorts would be very unfavourably interpreted and would be much exploited by enemy propaganda. So I hope you will manage to persuade the Admiralty.

[7] 6174 Guard of 11 August. L/WS/1/582. [8] 1558–S of 11 August. *Ibid.*
[9] See No. 623, Minute 2.

661

Government of India, External Affairs Department to Secretary of State

Telegram, L/P&S/12/4629: f 229

IMPORTANT NEW DELHI, *16 August 1944, 10.40 pm*
SECRET *Received: 17 August, 2 am*

10729. Addressed Secretary of State for India repeated Washington for Agent General.

Your telegram 17493[1] of August 10th. Drew Pearson article.

2. We have not yet seen His Majesty's Government's replies to Washington telegrams on this subject, but we feel strongly that British Embassy should be

[1] This tel., the date of which should be 9 August, informed the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. that no reference to the Drew Pearson article had been traced in the British Press. L/P&S/12/4629: f 245.

supported in carrying this matter further with the State Department.[2] We must point out that although we have stopped this particular wild involved press message and are doing our best to prevent entry of newspapers or letters carrying text of Drew Pearson's article it is possible copies will slip through and obtain publicity in India. Publication of Phillips' views which seems to be authentic would have deplorable effect and we wish to draw particular attention to unworthy sneers at the Indian Army. It is difficult with press set-up in India to counter the effect of such an article and it is particularly regrettable at a time when we have been asked to relax the rigour of censorship to be compelled to use such powers in defence against attacks by personal representative of our greatest Ally.

3. A further point arises that understand designation of Phillips is still President's personal representative in India. Whether or not he was in any way concerned in the leakage, views he has stated would make it impossible for us to do other than regard him as *persona non grata* and we could not again receive him. His views are not what we are entitled to expect from a professedly friendly envoy.

4. Draft has been prepared in consultation with Home Department and Viceroy has seen.

[2] In tel. 18435 of 20 August, the S. of S. informed the G. of I., External Affairs Dept. of Mr Winant's letter to Mr Eden conveying the State Department's apology for the leakage (No. 610) and of Mr Eden's acknowledgement. *Ibid.*: f 228.

662

Sir G. Laithwaite to Mr Amery

L/PO/6/110: f 54

CONFIDENTIAL

OFFICES OF THE WAR CABINET, GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W. 1,
16 August 1944

Dear Secretary of State,

I have informed the Deputy Prime Minister of your wish that your statement of dissent at the meeting of the Cabinet on 14th August[1] should be added to the minutes. He asked me to say that the ground of your dissent, viz. that the Viceroy's opinion on the drafting of the answer to Mr Gandhi should not be overridden, should have been taken at previous meetings, and that your agreement with the previous Cabinet decisions makes it impossible for you to take that ground now.

Yours sincerely,

J. G. LAITHWAITE

[1] See No. 653.

663

Mr Amery to Mr Attlee

L/PO/6/110: f 53

INDIA OFFICE, *16 August 1944*

My dear Clem,

I really cannot accept your argument that my note of dissent to the Cabinet Minute of August 14th is inadmissible because at a previous stage of the correspondence I assented to draft telegrams being sent to the Viceroy. My objection throughout has been not so much to the wording of the drafts as to the overriding of the earnest and repeated protests of the Viceroy.

A Minister is put in an impossible position if he has to register his formal protest at every stage of a negotiation about which he is not entirely happy or otherwise forfeit his normal right of registering his dissent from a conclusion whose character can only be appreciated when the negotiations have been completed.

In any case your point, such as it is, can be met by a very slight amendment in my note of dissent, and I am prepared to let it stand in the following form:

[*There follows the last para. of No. 653 with the words 'and repeatedly' underlined.*]

Yours ever,

L. S. AMERY

664

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *16 August 1944*

Received: 25 August

I was greatly relieved yesterday to get your telegram[1] saying that you proposed to issue the "longer catechism" of the two alternatives[2] presented to you by the Cabinet. I am sure that it would have been a great mistake at this juncture to have invited a direct collision with the Prime Minister and the Cabinet on an issue, not of real substance, but of tone and wording, the full importance of which would never have been recognised by the public if things had to come into the open and would otherwise have only prejudiced your relations with the Government in the event of a more serious showdown. I have never concealed from myself the possibility that such a showdown might have to take

[1] No. 658. [2] See No. 632 (with amendments in No. 655) and No. 643.

place some day, but it could only be on a major issue of principle on which we both stood together to the bitter end.

2. The real trouble, as we both know well, is that you and I both genuinely mean to implement the Government's pledges, if they can be implemented, and at any rate to make quite clear that we are sincerely doing our best to promote a solution even if we have to stand firmly by the conditions which are essential to enable India to start off at peace within herself and in conditions which are likely to have some reasonable stability. The Prime Minister passionately hopes that any solution involving the fulfilment of our pledges can still somehow or other be prevented, and with that in view naturally makes difficulties at every stage. In between come the Cabinet, most of whom agree with us in their hearts, and would do so even more if it became a question of stating a policy in public. But when in the Cabinet room a particular question crops up, they are overborne by the Prime Minister's vehemence and are glad to find an escape from open disagreement with him by accepting arguments against a particular matter brought up, whether it be an Indian Finance Member, Bajpai's status, or the terms of an answer to Gandhi. We have just to be patient and carry on as best we can. You at any rate have another four years before you, during which many changes may occur in the political scene.

Quite true, and yet the S. of S. is vilified in the Hindu Press even more than the P.M.

W.

3. Meanwhile, we can only hope that the longer catechism will not alienate too many supporters and friendly neutrals, whether in India or outside, or lead to some unholy alliance between Gandhi and Jinnah for the purpose of embarrassing us. Naturally, I used that argument, with many others, in my two days' battle on Friday and Monday, but without effect. I find it difficult, however, to believe that much can come of the talks, for it is obvious that Jinnah on his side will insist on tightening up his demands, while Gandhi looks like beginning to pull back already.

I am afraid that it has caused a lot of harm, and has rallied to Gandhi some support that he was in danger of losing.

W.

4. There is no doubt that Winston is very annoyed at your ever having let Gandhi out. Myself I am by no means sure that what has happened isn't the best possible thing. Gandhi has given away his executive and all the ardent workers in the Congress Party by his disavowal of sabotage and all other than symbolic civil disobedience; he has upset Hindu feeling without really conciliating Jinnah. Ramaswami Aiyyar's remarks the other day to [? on] the disaster India would have suffered but for Central control during the last year or two are very much to the point. All of which is making towards a general shake-up

and disintegration of the intransigent over-centralised political parties and so, one can only hope, towards the emergence of a more practical and compromising outlook on the whole big problem. Given our desire that the problem should be solved, that is all to the good.

5. I spent some hours last night reading an advance copy of Beverley Nichols' book[3] on India. There is much in it that is shrewd and truthful, but even more that is blatant, aggressive and unfriendly. Not content with a vigorous denunciation of Congress, Gandhi, etc., which is only saying in more picturesque language what I have said myself, or what is contained in Coupland's book,[4] he denounces Hinduism root and branch as a debased and utterly discreditable outlook on life and can find nothing in contemporary Indian music, art, literature or journalism to redeem the general sordid unsavouriness of the whole picture. On the other hand, in Jinnah, the future Emperor of Pakistan, he finds the only Indian whom he has met with a constructive and not purely negative outlook. I should have thought that Pakistan was essentially a negation, but that may be a matter of opinion. The book is sure to cause a storm in India, of the same sort as was created years ago by Miss Mayo's *Mother India*.[5] In this country and in America it may possibly do some good by its frank speaking on the subject of Congress and of Bengal politics and its flaying of Gandhi. But it would have been far better if it could have been written more moderately and in better taste. I don't know the man, but he must be a curious creature. Not so many years ago he was an ardent out and out pacifist and at that date I imagine he would have looked upon Gandhi as his hero.

* * *

17 August

11. In my last letter[6] I told you that I hoped to be able to cable you satisfactory news about the food situation before the letter actually reached you. We have been worrying away at it all this last week. Unfortunately the report which the Chiefs of Staff would have made last week has been held up to see how it can be fitted in with certain new strategical schemes under consideration. I can only hope that we shall have a decision by next week and that it will result in a figure for the last quarter of the year which you may feel good enough to go on with. I need not say that we have continually pressed the much greater advantage of a six months statement, even if no additional totals were involved, but the Chiefs of Staff just dare not commit themselves so far ahead, even though they realise that the first essential to operations based on India is that the base itself should be in working order.

3 *Verdict on India* (London, Jonathan Cape, 1944).
4 Sir R. Coupland, *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*, 3 Parts (London, Oxford University Press, 1942–3).
5 London, Jonathan Cape, 1927.
6 No. 635, para. 12.

12. The Drew Pearson performance has attracted no attention at all here, though his article must have been widely spread in America. There is no doubt that the comments attributed to Phillips were genuine. Phillips, who is a charming person to meet, is really, I fear, something of a nincompoop and seems to have swallowed all the stuff he was told by Indian journalists and political deputations. Whether Linlithgow might have handled him a little more skilfully when he first arrived, or taken more pains to get him to understand the facts, is perhaps an open question. The trouble is that he seems to have gone out to India with the idea that it was his business to find a solution of the political problem and even that I had commissioned him to do so!

665

Minute by Mr Casey

R/3/2/54: f 74

17 August 1944

S[ecretary to the] G[overnor of] B[engal]
This is a good note.[1]

I would like to hear it argued as to whether or not the best line for us to take would not be that we are sick of the whole business, and that we want to get out as soon as possible. If, by reason of long drawn out Hindu–Muslim wrangling, we are kept in India (and, at the same time, we are slanged by both sides for remaining here), we gain nothing and we would seem to be risking losing a great deal—in the shape of the continued and growing obloquy of the world, and particularly in the United States, on the mistaken ground that, through grasping Imperialism, we are hanging on by our teeth in India.

2. I don't think it is an exaggeration to say that we have to weigh in the balance good Anglo-American relations—or a neat and tidy Indian settlement. If we are obliged to remain in India for another 10 years, ill-disposed Americans will use this as a very heavy stick to beat us with—and this will poison Anglo-American relations—which is the most important matter in prospect in the post-war world. Personally, I would rather get out of India tomorrow than risk the damage to Anglo-American relations that would inevitably be entailed by any long drawn out negotiations for a settlement of the Indian problem.

3. The above line of argument prompts me to believe that we should from now on begin to say publicly that we are getting sick and tired of the whole business, and that if Hindus and Muslims cannot reach a very early agreement, we propose to agree to any arrangement (however slap-dash and however provocative

of future internal trouble in India it may be)—rather than hang around waiting for two tom cats to patch up their quarrels.

R. G. C.

[1] Mr Casey was discussing a memorandum by Mr P. J. Griffiths headed *The Indian Political Situation and the Future, August 1944*. R/3/2/54: ff 76–7.

666

Sir J. Colville (Bombay) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/165: ff 97–8

CONFIDENTIAL GOVERNMENT HOUSE, GANESHKHIND, *18 August 1944*

Report No. 28

2. *Political.* All eyes are on Malabar Hill and the coming meeting of Gandhi and Jinnah, which I have just heard is now postponed. Owing to the information we have received about possible demonstrations by Khaksars on the one hand and the Hindu Mahasabha on the other, the Commissioner of Police has taken steps to preserve quiet, and will, if necessary, cordon off the area to ensure that the ring is kept! I find it difficult to offer any comment on the prospects. You will know much more than I do. Seen from this angle, there seems to be much confusion in Congress ranks, and not a little bitterness against Gandhi for 'selling the pass'. On the other hand, he still holds unchallenged leadership within the Party, and what he says will go with them. His belated, but definite, injunction to underground workers to give themselves up has produced results. Several such workers, for whom a reward was offered, have given themselves up in Belgaum, but Achyut Patwardhan, whom we particularly want, still lies low. Muslim League circles are solidly behind Jinnah and think they are on a good wicket. The Mahasabha is, as might be expected, the most vocal opponent of any rapprochement, and at Poona, which is a stronghold of the Sabha, there have been some rowdy meetings. They asked permission to hold public meetings in Bombay, in the first week of August, to carry on agitation against Pakistan. This was refused, and no trouble followed. The Communists have shown some activity in Bombay City, and in one or two District centres, in exhorting Labour to support communal unity. Altogether, the political situation is much more lively than I have seen it since I came, but very confused. I heard a rumour that Kher, the former Prime Minister, recently released, was going to approach me shortly with a request to withdraw his resignation and be allowed to form a Ministry, but I have no confirmation of this, and it seems to me highly unlikely. He would, of course, only move if he received instructions

from Gandhi, and I think Gandhi will hold the card of provincial co-operation up his sleeve for some time yet. I have seen the exchange of letters[1] with you, and I think it will clear the air by letting people know exactly where Government stands.

There was no reaction to our suppression of the August 9th demonstration, beyond a few acid articles in the papers. As you know, we arrested 25 demonstrators and released them the same evening. I had to make the decision as to whether the demonstration should be allowed, and had no doubt that the proposal to read out the August resolution made the request impossible to assent to.

[1] See Nos. 614 and 659.

667

Mr Attlee to Mr Amery

L/PO/6/110: f 48

PRIVY COUNCIL OFFICE, GREAT GEORGE STREET, S.W. 1,
18 August 1944

My dear Leo,
Thank you for your letter.[1] I gather that you now wish to have your dissent registered on the ground that the *repeatedly* expressed opinion of the Viceroy should not be overridden.

As this recognises the fact that at earlier stages you agreed with the action of the Cabinet, I have no objection to its insertion in the Minutes.

Yours ever,
CLEM

[1] No. 663.

668

War Cabinet

Chiefs of Staff Committee. Paper C.O.S. (44) 752 (0)

L/E/8/3324: ff 195–6

ECONOMIC SITUATION IN INDIA—FOODGRAINS

REPORT BY CHIEFS OF STAFF

WAR CABINET OFFICES, S.W. 1, *19 August 1944*

In our report[1] dated 22nd June, 1944 on the provision of shipping for the import of wheat into India we included a recommendation that we should review the

position during the first half of August and make further recommendations to cover the last quarter of the year. This suggestion was approved by the Prime Minister and we now report as follows after consultation with the India Office.

2. In his telegram[2] of 19th April, the Viceroy stated that his outstanding requirement for wheat amounted to 500,000 tons by the end of the year, with a further 224,000 tons during the first quarter of 1945, a total of 724,000 tons. Against this requirement arrangements have been made to ship 200,000 tons during the months of July, August and September.

3. There remains, therefore, a deficit of 300,000 tons this year, and the Viceroy in his cables of 5th July[3] and 11th August[4] has again stated definitely that further imports of wheat must be made not only if a famine is to be prevented, but also to sustain India's production of war material at the present level. Alternative sources for much of this production will be difficult if not impossible to find.

4. We have already stated that the provision of wheat for India is a military requirement of great strategical importance. The demands of the Defence Services for wheat during the year May, 1944 to April, 1945 amount to 724,000 tons, which is the exact amount of the Viceroy's outstanding requirement. These demands, if met at the expense of civil requirements, may well result in a second disastrous famine, the military consequences of which would undoubtedly undermine the morale of the Indian Army and prejudice the security of India as a base.

5. Arrangements have already been made to cover 200,000 tons in the third quarter of this year by corresponding reductions in other military requirements. We now recommend that a programme for 300,000 tons shall be included in the statement of military shipping requirements for the fourth quarter of this year.

ANDREW CUNNINGHAM
A. E. NYE (for C.I.G.S.)
D. C. S. EVILL (for C.A.S.)

1 [Note in original:] C.O.S. (44) 554 (0). [L/E/8/3323.]
2 [Note in original:] 805–S of 19th April—not attached. [No. 466.]
3 [Note in original:] 1352–S of 5th July—Annex. [No. 566.]
4 [Note in original:] 1558 of 11th August—not attached. [L/F/6/ File 6101 of 1944. Pt. II.]

669

Government of India, Home Department to all Provincial Governments and Chief Commissioners (except Panth Piploda)

Express Letter, L/P&J/8/681: f 9

SECRET NEW DELHI, *21 August 1944*

No. 7/5/44—Poll(I)

Our letter No. 7/15/42–Poll(I)[1] dated 20th September, 1943, reviewed the activities of the Communist Party of India since the removal of the ban on the Party in July of the preceding year. The conclusion reached was that except in the propaganda sphere, where the activities of the Party had been objectionable, its legalisation had on the whole proved justified. It was recommended that Government should adopt an attitude of neutrality to the Party's activities.

2. Practically a year has elapsed. During this period, there have been no startling developments. The pro-war policy of the Party has been maintained, though the practical effect of it has been slight; and if public morale has improved it has been due far more to the success of the Allied Arms than to the teachings of the Communists. Their anti-government propaganda has also been continued and, if anything, has increased; but even here it appears from the replies to our letter No. 7/6/44–Poll(I)[2] dated 19th May 1944, that the circulation of the Communist press is small and the effect of its writings neither great nor increasing. In general, the Party's influence seems to be on the decline; its finances are showing progressive signs of deterioration; and its political approaches to the Congress and the Muslim League have produced negligible results.

3. With the approaching end of the war, it is necessary to review a policy which was essentially "short term" in character and which was based partly on the desire to give a fair chance to any political party in this country that was prepared openly to support the war effort. When the war has been won, the Communists will be faced with the need of finding a new platform; and though their post-war activities may well be given a specious cloak of Socialism or Communism, we have no reason to believe that their long-term revolutionary goal has ever been set aside. Indeed, the essence of the problem is, as it always has been in the "long term view", that the majority of the party are revolutionaries first and Communists second, and that they will make every effort to take advantage of the troubled conditions that are bound to accompany the difficult processes of demobilisation and changing over from war time to peace time economy.

4. The need for continued and increasing vigilance is therefore, clear. This need not, however, involve any radical departure from our existing policy; nor do we consider that any such departure is at present either necessary or desirable.

Certainly any drastic step, such as reimposing the ban on the Party, would only drive Communist activity underground, thus rendering it more dangerous, and at the same time provide the Party with the sort of romantic appeal which it at present lacks. It would also destroy any faint hopes there may be of the Party's developing as a constitutional opposition to the capitalistic clique which appears at present to be dominating the Congress Party. From all these points of view the balance of advantage lies in keeping the party legal as long as possible. We consider, therefore, that the existing policy of neutrality towards the Party and its members should be maintained. We would emphasize, however, that this policy entitles the Communists to no favours; they should receive the same treatment under the law as any other member of the public. Further it gives them no excuse for underground activities and thus justifies the prompt suppression of any attempt to revive a secret organisation.

5. The policy of "no favours" should, we consider, be applied particularly to the Communist press (subject of course to the procedure that governs the relations between Government and the Press as a whole) and we would expect the Communist newspapers to be proceeded against, in whatever way possible, if they offend against the law. We favour the taking of security under the Press Act where this can be done; but there is also the power to subject Communist newspapers to precensorship orders under Defence Rule 41[3] in respect to particular matters or classes of matter; and there may be cases in which such action would be justified and effective. We are arranging for the strict application of the newsprint control and paper economy orders to the Communist Press. No exemption from, or relaxation of, these orders will be granted to any Communist newspaper so long as the present tone of their press continues and we should be glad if you would have a watch maintained to ensure that the Communist press in your Province does not evade the provisions of these orders.

R. TOTTENHAM
Additional Secretary to the Government of India

[1] No. 127. [2] Not printed. [3] See No. 345, note 6.

670

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *23 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of 9th August 1944.[1] As I expected, my letter[2] (or rather that of His Majesty's Government) to Gandhi has had a bad press.

[1] No. 635. [2] No. 659.

Congressmen and Liberals take the line that it is "worse than Cripps", and say that it is now clear that His Majesty's Government and I are determined that there shall be no political advance. Dragging in the Depressed Classes has been severely criticised. There have been many bitter statements and articles in the Hindu newspapers. The Muslims have shown less interest, and the editor of Jinnah's paper *Dawn* seems at first to have read my letter correctly as a restatement of the Cripps' offer. But he later stressed the point, which has been taken by Hindu editors, that if all elements are to agree, His Majesty's Government can, and presumably will, obstruct progress for an indefinite period. In one leader *Dawn* described my letter as arrogant, and although the paper has criticised Gandhi for facing both ways and negotiating both with Jinnah and with me simultaneously, Muslim reactions are not sympathetic to us. Dalal, who is fresh from fairly intimate contacts with leading Congress people, told me he thought the tone of my letter deplorable, though he approved generally the principles stated in it. He agreed that the comments on it are unfair, but one does not expect fair or intelligent comment on a matter of this kind, and the average Indian reader of the newspaper assumes that what he sees in the leading articles is true. The omission from the letter of any suggestion that we hoped for the success of the discussion between Gandhi and Jinnah, and were prepared to consider any proposals that would by and large satisfy all the main interests in India, has been commented on as a serious defect and discourtesy. In fact, what I told[3] His Majesty's Government was entirely correct, my own letter[4] would have achieved the same purpose without arousing nearly the same bitterness. I feel very sore about this. Some day we have got to negotiate with these people, not necessarily Gandhi perhaps, and this letter has destroyed at one blow a reputation that had been accorded me in the Congress press of being at least straightforward and courteous in my correspondence with Congress.

The Hindu line will now be that the British are the common enemy, and that the Hindus and Muslims must join to secure independence. I doubt if this will carry them very far, because an alliance between the communities in opposition to the British can only be superficial and therefore ineffective, or dangerous, especially from the Muslim point of view. The temporary combination of the Congress and the League at the last session of the Assembly was a great nuisance, and something on these lines might be tried again. His Majesty's Government's letter has certainly increased its likelihood. I doubt, however, if Jinnah will agree to the more dangerous course which commits the Muslims to an independent settlement of some kind without the British holding the ring. There is a lack of realism about all this manœuvring, and politically it has been a depressing week.

Mudie informed me some days ago that Nehru's daughter, Mrs Feroze Gandhi, was expecting a baby shortly and that if Congress ran true to form we might be pressed to release Nehru on parole so that he might visit her. I said

that I could not agree to Nehru's release, but that if his daughter were dangerously ill, we might transfer him to Bombay, where she is living, and let him see her under escort. According to newspaper reports Mrs Feroze Gandhi has had her baby and there has been no suggestion yet that Nehru should be permitted to see her. I mentioned in Council that I should refuse to entertain any proposal for Nehru's release, and my colleagues agreed.

2. There is not much political news from the Provinces. Lewis reports that attempts to form a new Government in Orissa have been abandoned and it seems that he is in for a long spell of Section 93. In the Punjab there is some dismay at Jinnah's return to the limelight, and the Hindus and Sikhs, who do not like the Unionist Party but prefer it to the Muslim League, are apprehensive about the future. Should Gandhi and Jinnah come to terms, Jinnah's position throughout India would be very much stronger, and he might redeem his recent failure in the Punjab. Casey has told me no more about his troubles, but will doubtless discuss them when he is here at the end of the month for the Governors' Conference.

3. I agree with you about the sterling balances. Winston and those of your colleagues who support him on Indian affairs do not realise the importance of sympathetic allowance for the Indian point of view in this matter. I told you before[5] that if His Majesty's Government had approached the problem in an entirely different way I believe they could have had a satisfactory response. Raisman has no doubt discussed the whole business with you, and subject to anything he may say, I agree that we shall have to wait before attempting a settlement.

[Para. 4, on the Bombay Explosion Enquiry Report, omitted.]

5. I see from paragraph 5 of your letter that it was Winston's opposition that caused the postponement of a decision about Bajpai's status for another six months. I asked you last week[6] to let me know what the object of the postponement was, as I cannot see that six months will make any difference one way or the other. I suppose it is just part of Winston's general hate against India.

6. Casey is looking for a large number of experts, among them the people competent to deal with the irrigation problems whom you mention in paragraph 7 of your letter. I have pointed out to Casey that for certain kinds of irrigation the engineers already in India are probably at the top of their profession. Criticisms of Indian methods and administration have now gone so far that we are apt to forget that in one or two respects we had a world reputation before the war. We probably do not know very much about high dams or the problems which arise in large river deltas. The Punjab recently got out an

[3] See No. 636. [4] See No. 637. [5] No. 607, para. 4. [6] No. 660, para. 11.

American expert to advise them on high dams, and Casey may need some men from America or Holland for his delta problems. But for straight irrigation he ought to be able to find what he wants in India.

[Para. 7, on the use of the title "The Honourable" by India's representatives in foreign countries, omitted.]

8. I have telegraphed[7] to you about Bellenger's article in the *Sunday Pictorial*. Auchinleck thinks that the effect on morale of the persistent "Blimp" myth is bad and that we ought to try to have the myth abolished. I doubt if this is possible, but the criticisms of Bellenger and his kind are in fact illogical. India, according to them, is climatically and otherwise intolerable for the British soldier, but the permanent British residents live in the lap of luxury and are interested only in having a good time. The climate and the liability to tropical diseases are of course very much the same for everybody living in India under settled conditions. On my tours I have seen a good deal of the conditions in which both the Fighting and the Civil Services live, and I do not think the junior members of the Civil Services lead a particularly luxurious life. They have certain amenities, e.g. servants are plentiful, though often bad, and their wives do not have to do the cooking or the house work. On the other hand, many of them are separated from their families for half the year, in many places there is little company, strengths are inadequate for the work to be done, and the climate is trying. In the postscript to your letter you refer to Tidy's opinion that people who had been out over four years seemed limp and jaded. A fairly high proportion of the men in the Civil Services have done over six, and many over eight, years without home leave. I think there is a good deal of softness among the British, especially the mercantile element, in the larger towns, for example, in Calcutta and Bombay visitors usually get a bad impression. But in the country as a whole the small body of British civilians can certainly not be said to be failing in their duty. Most of them are, I think, resigned to the stupid criticism they get from home, and I doubt if Auchinleck is right in thinking that morale either in the Army or in the Civil Services is much affected by it. I have dealt with points of detail in my telegram. Bellenger does not apparently realise that the responsibility for conditions in the 14th Army rests in the main with His Majesty's Government, and that for many Services—especially for the Medical and Nursing Services—we must rely on the help we can get from His Majesty's Government. We cannot ourselves produce the doctors or the nurses, or the medical stores required for a first-class hospital organisation. My wife and I have between us seen most of the large military hospitals, and it is, I am sure, nonsense to talk about a second Mesopotamia scandal or anything of that kind. If you think that a visit by selected M.P.s would help, I shall be very glad to co-operate, and I agree with Auchinleck that a little plain speaking by members of the Government would not be amiss.

9. I have referred your letter[8] about Anglo-American relations to Auchinleck, and suggested to him that he might discuss it with Rowlands, who is in close touch with the senior American officers here and is able to take a rather more detached view than people in G.H.Q. or the civil side of the Government of India. Covell, the American General in charge of the Service of Supply here, dined quietly with me not long ago, and we had a long talk. He was quite happy in his relations with our staff, and if all Americans had the same spirit of co-operation as, say, Covell and Wheeler, there would be no difficulty. Stilwell, on the other hand, is most definitely anti-British, and a large proportion of his subordinates take their tone from him. Incidents like the disclosure of Phillips' opinions by Drew Pearson naturally do not help. My Deputy Private Secretary was told a day or two ago by Merrell, who is in charge of the Personal Representative's Office, that Phillips had been removed from the American Foreign Service because of this leakage. I suppose Merrell knows the facts, but if the leakage occurred at the White House, the decision seems rather hard on Phillips, though of course he would not be welcomed here again. He was a very light weight, who had, I think, no assets beyond good manners.

10. I have little news about food. French has made an excellent impression with Srivastava and his officials, and I hope his tour will be useful. I understand he is off to Bombay for some days and will return at the end of the month so that he may meet those of the Governors whose Provinces he will not visit. He will then go to Calcutta and the South, and hopes to have a look at the Malabar district which is in difficulties, and at Travancore and Cochin. The monsoon is likely to be normal on the whole, but I still have reports of damage from excessive rain and from drought. Clow, in particular, is worried about the incidence of rainfall in Assam. The transplantation of rice is a tricky business, and unless the rainfall suits it the yield of the crop is affected. Clow reported a few days ago that he still hoped Assam might be self-supporting, but he feared there might be a deficit to be made good from other Provinces. We are still without any more news about food imports though His Majesty's Government promised to reconsider this at the beginning of August.

11. I am very glad that your support about escorts for the *Haj* pilgrimage has been successful. The Commander-in-Chief, Eastern Fleet, informed me a few days ago that he could find escorts for two voyages and we were able to make our announcement. I am sure this will have an excellent effect. I did not see the announcement proposed by the Commonwealth Relations Department in draft, but the telegram[9] to you containing it came to me in circulation and I had

[7] Not traced in India Office Records.

[8] Dated 9 August 1944. The letter dealt with relations between British and United States forces in India. L/PO/4/24: ff 354–5.

[9] L/P&J/8/762.

it modified. It would be misleading to say that we acted in response to insistent demands from the Muslims—in fact we anticipated the Muslim demands and began to press for the escorts long ago.

12. I enclose comments by my Reforms Commissioner on the suggestions in paragraphs 5 and 6 of your letter of 1st August.[10] I think there is sense in what Menon says, and for the time being at least we can only wait and see what happens. As I told you before, there is some opinion in favour of going back to the 1935 Act, but as Menon points out, the Party leaders might prefer the existing arrangements to anything of that kind.

13. In paragraph 7 of the same letter you suggested that it might be a good thing to start an enquiry about the factual material available on other constitutions. It seems to me that adequate factual material is already available. A book called *Selected Constitutions of the World* was prepared by order of the Irish Provisional Government in 1922 and was printed in India in 1934. A volume has also been produced called *Constitutions of All Countries*—printed and published in London by His Majesty's Stationery Office.[11] Then there is Bryce's *Modern Democracies*[12] and Coupland's Part III[13] has some useful material.

India's main interest in the constitutions of other countries lies in the help they may give towards solving two problems: (1) the protection of minorities and the representation of minorities in the Government and the Legislature, and (2) the division of functions between the Centre and the federating units.

A good deal of information about the protection of minorities is available in documents issued by the Minorities Section of the League of Nations and in treaties based on those documents, one of which has been published by Chatham House. I enclose a list[14] of the documents and publications to which I refer.

There is also ample information available about the division of functions between the Centre and the federating units. I have not read the report of the Canadian Royal Commission on Dominion–Provincial Relations (the Rowell–Sirois Report, 1940), but understand it has indicated the trend of modern thought and practice. Again the subject is being actively canvassed in Australia and as soon as any report is published about the Australian Convention which met in November–December 1942 and the subsequent consideration of the problem, copies can be obtained for use in India.

I think Indian opinion would prefer that it should be left to the constitution-making body itself to collect any further material it may require. Material collected by the India Office or the Government of India would inevitably be suspect.

14. In my letter of July 11th,[15] I promised to let you have any comments by my Labour Department here on the memorandum handed to you by the representatives of the Indian Federation of Labour. The Labour Department have

very little to say. They think labour inadequately represented on our Reconstruction Committees, and other similar bodies, and are taking steps to put this right. I doubt if there is much substance in the Federation's claim to have taken an important part in the war effort. Labour organisation in India is rudimentary, and the "leaders" are often a nuisance to the authorities without doing much for the led. Ambedkar is full of reforming zeal, and will do all he can to improve conditions and to give labour something like a "charter" for the future. But we cannot yet accept M. N. Roy's pretensions, or give the Federation the political prominence they seem to demand. The question of transferring merchant seamen from the Commerce to the Labour Department is being discussed departmentally.

15. I enclose a copy of a note[16] by my Deputy Private Secretary which he wrote on an enquiry from me after I had read Lady Hartog's book *India in Outline*.[17] The note is not authoritative in the sense that Abell did not obtain expert opinion before writing it. But it brings out in an interesting way the fluctuations in the increase of population and the unreliability of statistics in this country.

16. There is much to be said for Winston's views about land tenure which you mention in paragraph 16 of your letter. One of the points down for discussion at the Governors' Conference is the possibility of collective farming on Government estates, or, by co-operative methods, on private estates. The subject is clearly a very difficult one. I suppose that on a mixed farm of, say, a thousand acres at home, a permanent staff of thirty men might be employed with a couple of tractors and up-to-date implements of all kinds. In the Punjab a village with an area of 1,000 acres would be a fairly large one and the land would support 200 to 300 families. If one really went in for collective farming and treated the land as it would be treated at home, there might be whole-time work for perhaps fifty able-bodied men, and, as at home, casual labour would have to be called in for weeding, harvesting and so on. Efficient collective farming would therefore involve an economic upheaval. There is also the social standing that the ownership even of a small holding in India gives. The small farmer and the hereditary tenant in this country are most tenacious of their rights, and our policy has been to preserve them, and even to extend them in respect of tenancies. I doubt if a great agrarian reform could be made except by the most ruthless methods, and I shall be interested to see what the Governors think. I don't think anyone knows how many hundreds of thousands or millions of lives the Russian agrarian reforms cost, but it must have been considerable.

[10] No. 618. [11] In 1938. [12] London, Macmillan & Co., 1921.
[13] Sir R. Coupland, *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India*. Part III *The Future of India* (London, Oxford University Press, 1943).
[14] Not printed. [15] No. 574, para. 14. [16] Not printed.
[17] London, Cambridge University Press, 1944.

17. Firoz, who returned very full of himself, has suggested that Kingsley Martin, the editor of *New Statesman and Nation*, might be invited to come to India to see things for himself. Firoz has great confidence in his own powers of persuasion, and saw a number of people including Agatha Harrison, Horace Alexander and Kingsley Martin, on whom he felt he had made a great impression. According to him, Kingsley Martin came for a short interview but stayed for two hours or more and said that if he could be given a high air priority, he would be delighted to come to India for a short visit. I rather doubt if Firoz really made the impression he thinks, and people like Kingsley Martin usually have fixed opinions which personal inspections are not likely to alter. You might let me know what you think; I very much doubt if the visit should be encouraged.

Another suggestion from Firoz is that British Industrialists with interests or intended interests in India should be given special facilities to visit India. I think this is quite sound, although passages both by air and by sea are so tight just now that it may be difficult to fit them in.

18. I sent you by the last bag a set of the papers prepared for the Governors' Conference. Casey was anxious for us to discuss a very wide range of subjects, but I will try to keep the business within reasonable limits.

19. We considered in Council on the 21st August a proposal from the Home Member for the grant of war allowances to members of the Secretary of State's services which, if you approved it, would imply the grant of similar allowances to members of the Central Services and to a very large number of our subordinate personnel. At present, as you probably know, dearness allowances have been granted only to officials on pay not exceeding Rs. 250 per mensem. This is the limit in the most expensive areas; elsewhere the ceiling is Rs. 200 or Rs. 150. There are two different scales, one for industrial workers such as those employed on the railways, in the ordnance factories, and so on, and the other for clerical staffs. The Home Member's recommendation for the All-India Services was an allowance of Rs.50 on pay not exceeding Rs. 500 per mensem; an allowance of 10% of pay on pay exceeding Rs.500 but not exceeding Rs. 1,000 per mensem; and an allowance of Rs.100 on pay above Rs. 1,000 but not exceeding Rs.1,500. These rates were to apply to married officials. The relief for single men was to go up to Rs.750 and was to be at a lower rate. The Finance Member, who was supposed to be in agreement with Mudie, made a lugubrious statement in which opposition was more prominent than support. The Indian Members took a high moral line and said that after all the sufferings of the officials in India had not been very great, and that as long as our humbler employees had not been fully compensated for the rise in the cost of living, there was no real case for granting concessions to officers. They also took the more practical ground that if the Home Member's concessions were announced,

discontent among industrial and clerical staffs, who contend that their dearness allowances are inadequate, would flare up and we should have to deal with strikes. They also pointed out that it was illogical when we claimed to be controlling prices to admit in a big way that we had failed to do so and we [? were] obliged to spend large sums of money on helping the more highly paid Government servants. The Home Member's proposals were therefore not approved, but as I think the grant of relief to junior and "middle piece" officials important, I closed the discussion by saying that we should have to go into the whole matter in greater detail, and I am appointing a Committee of Council for the purpose. The discussion was useful because it showed that the proposals were likely to have far wider consequences than the Home Member's paper implied; but I think my Indian colleagues failed to realise that the people who would benefit by them would in the main be subordinates (such as engine drivers, guards and the like) on pay above Rs. 250 but probably less than Rs. 600 or so. I will let you know how the discussion proceeds. In the meantime Casey is determined to give liberal allowances to the Services under the rule-making control of his Government, and I gather that his Ministers agree with him. Some of the other Ministerial Provinces may do the same, and the delay here is likely to cause sharp reactions in one or two of the Section 93 Provinces, particularly Madras.

20. You will remember the memorandum[18] by Spens about judicial reforms. This has now been examined departmentally, and I am sending by this bag a copy of a note, dated 29th July[19] and a letter, dated 19th August[20] from Thorne, with a copy of a letter[21] I am sending to Governors. I agree with you that the memorandum is important, and I shall be interested to see the Governors' reactions to it.

21. I was amused to see that since the Americans took over the Assam railways a few months ago, there have been 33 derailments and 6 collisions, whereas all the Congress efforts to sabotage the Assam railways in 1942 only caused 6 derailments.

Enclosure to No. 670

Note by Rao Bahadur V. P. Menon

L/P&J/8/519: ff 59–60

SECRETARIAT OF THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL (REFORMS), NEW DELHI,
SECRET *17 August 1944*

The general idea of the Secretary of State is to remove from Part II of the Act the condition[22] regarding the minimum number of acceding States necessary to

18 19 20 and 21 L/P&J/8/463. 22 [Note in original:] section 5(2).

inaugurate Federation. Although the Secretary of State has not made this quite clear, this implies that the States would still retain the option to federate, but that they would no longer be able to hold up Federation by not coming in. In other words, under the Secretary of State's plan, a Federation of British Indian Provinces will be set up at once with the option for the States to join the Federation or keep out as they choose. It is not difficult to imagine the reactions of the States to such a scheme. In the first place, since the constitution is a temporary one, they will be hesitant to join. Secondly, even if a State wants to come in, and even if H.M.G. is the final authority to accept or reject an Instrument of Accession, it will be found that the negotiations with the States cannot be conducted ignoring the new Government of India especially in regard to financial and fiscal matters. Knowing the sentiments of the British Indian parties as they do, it is most unlikely that the States will wish to join the Federation—in fact, they would have every inducement to stand out.

2. Turning now to British India, let us analyse the implications of the Secretary of State's proposals. At the Centre, in the place of the present Executive and Legislature, the Executive and Legislature contemplated by Part II of the Act will be set up for a limited period of years. Instead of the Governor-General in Council being responsible for the administration of all the federal subjects, we shall have two authorities—(1) the Governor-General in his discretion administering Defence, external affairs, ecclesiastical affairs and tribal areas; and (2) a Ministry administering the other Central subjects, subject to the special responsibility of the Governor-General under section 12. Further, the Secretary of State will amend the Governor-General's Instrument of Instructions so as to ensure that once a coalition Ministry is established at the Centre, the Governor-General should give them his confidence for the lifetime of the Legislature even if they cease to command a majority in the Legislature.

3. It cannot surely be the Secretary of State's intention that this constitution should be imposed against the wishes of the major political parties. If that is not the intention, an agreement among the parties as regards the sharing of power in the Central Executive is a necessary first step for the successful working of the constitution. If there is agreement, is there any reason why the parties should not work the existing constitution under which there is no reservation of Defence, external affairs, etc? I myself think that they are more likely to accept the overriding powers of the Governor-General in the present Constitution, rather than agree to a position in which these vital subjects would be removed entirely from their purview, while the Governor-General would also have special powers over the rest of the field.

4. The condition that the coalition Ministry both in the Provinces and at the Centre would be preserved from the normal effects of an adverse Parliamentary

vote will make a vital change in the form of Government. This will be regarded as a highly retrograde step even for a limited period. Unless it is accompanied by provisions for safeguarding supplies and essential legislation, it will be impossible for such a Ministry to carry on. If that is done, the question arises to whom such a Ministry will be responsible. In any event such a Government is not the "responsible Government" contemplated by the Act.

5. In my opinion there is really no half-way house between the present constitution and the one that will ultimately be drafted by Indians themselves. We have now reached a stage at which an agreement among the parties is the condition precedent to the working of any form of Government either at the Centre or in the Provinces. The Cripps proposals have driven the Federation under the 1935 Act off the field and it would be difficult now to revive that scheme or any of its variants with any prospects of acceptance by the parties.

6. I would urge in conclusion that we should not allow our impatience at the continued stalemate to betray us into any hasty solution. The stand which we have taken on the Indian question is clear and logical; the essence of it is that progress in the constitutional field is conditional upon agreement among the parties in India. Efforts towards such an agreement are now on foot and we must await the outcome.

671

Sir B. Glancy (Punjab) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/247: ff 52–3

PRIVATE AND PERSONAL *23 August 1944*

No. 522–F.L.

Political interest has been focussed on the coming conversations between Gandhi and Jinnah. I agree with Your Excellency that nothing tangible is likely to emerge from these negotiations. It is as difficult as ever to tell what Gandhi has in his mind. Some believe that his main idea is to extract from Jinnah a definition of Pakistan and thus expose the hollowness of "vivisection". If this is his object, it seems scarcely conceivable that Jinnah will fall into the trap. If the C.R. formula were accepted, this would mean that twelve districts of the Punjab (the whole of the Ambala and Jullundur Divisions plus the district of Amritsar) would be excluded from Pakistan, and such a dismemberment of the Province would find few supporters amongst Punjabi Muslims. There are some faint indications that Muslim intelligentsia might be satisfied with a united India provided that Muslim representation at the Centre were satisfactorily increased. This would certainly be a saner solution than crude Pakistan, which has every

appearance of being the direct route to civil war in the Punjab. But it would not seem easy for Jinnah to persuade his followers that any such solution would amount to the fulfilment of the Pakistan doctrine as commonly preached; the attraction of Pakistan to the uninformed Muslim lies largely in the belief that within a given area it will place him at an advantage as against his non-Muslim neighbour in the matter of personal preferment and material welfare.

Whatever Gandhi's intentions may have been, his advance to Jinnah has certainly come at a most inopportune time so far as the Unionist Party is concerned. Jinnah's shares in the political market had begun to deteriorate. Thanks to Mr Gandhi Jinnah's importance has now revived and he will certainly do his best to ascribe to the Unionists the blame for any failure or disappointment in store for him at Bombay. The struggle between the Leaguers and the Unionists in the Punjab continues on much the same lines as before, but there should be some lull in the storm during the month of Ramzan. In urban areas the Muslim League appears to be growing in popularity, but has still not made much headway outside the towns. The Unionists scored a minor success the other day when their candidate for the Senior Vice-Chairmanship of the Sialkot District Board defeated the League nominee by 31 votes to 10; the individual chosen was by no means a strong candidate so far as personal merits were concerned.

Gandhi's manœuvres have had the effect of solidifying the great bulk of Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs against Pakistan. There is a very strong feeling that Gandhi's behaviour in using minority communities in the Punjab as a pawn in his game without consulting them in advance was most reprehensible. With the exception of a few communists the entire Sikh community has loudly condemned the approaching negotiations, and serious disorder may be expected before very long if the Sikhs are forced into the confines of Pakistan. Master Tara Singh has come back into the political arena as the most prominent leader amongst the Sikhs, and his threatened attack on Kapurthala[1] has receded into the background.

[1] See Nos. 516, para. 5 and 619.

672

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *23 August 1944*
Received: 1 September

Things are moving with incredible swiftness in France. It doesn't look as if there would be anything capable of holding us up this side of the Belgian border after

the mopping up at the Seine crossing, which should occupy the next week or ten days. As for the rest of France, the Free French seem to have sprung to arms everywhere and the little packets of Germans that are not forced to surrender will have great difficulty in extricating themselves north-eastwards. Their only chance now would be to pull out of Italy and the Balkans as quickly as they can and try to form some sort of inner line. But whether either Hitler's temperament or logistical considerations will allow them to do that in time is another question. According to a newspaper report, Rundstedt's dismissal was due to his having suggested that the Germans should fall back in France at once, instead of fighting it out in Normandy.

2. All this means that the thoughts of the P.M. and the C.I.G.S. are turned towards Burma. You will already have seen the telegrams[1] to Auchinleck telling him that Vanguard[2] is back in the picture, after long discussions here with Mountbatten. If the Americans do not veto this at the conference which is to take place very shortly, it means of course a very big additional strain on India's disembarkation, internal transport and food situation, not to speak of the inflationary effect of extra money spent in India. As regards this last point I had some talk with Gregory yesterday, and we could neither of us see any really effective anti-inflationary step except for the Americans to dig up a little of their useless gold and mobilise it for the war effort by selling it in India. However, the whole programme is cut so short from the point of view of time that I should not be surprised if in the end it had to be postponed until after the next year's monsoon.

24 August 1944

3. Paris is liberated by its own exertions, which is all to the good, and the German occupation of France is collapsing like a house of cards. With Rumania gone, Germany's oil supplies will be still further depleted, and the difficulty of getting troops back from Greece, as well as from Italy, in time to form a new front on the West would seem to be insuperable. So we are now heading rapidly for the next chapter which, so far as India is concerned, means added strain for at any rate the next year or so.

4. I attended a meeting of the Armistice and Post-War Committee of the Cabinet yesterday, which was considering a paper of the Chiefs of Staff on the question of what troops will be wanted in Europe and the Middle East twelve months after the armistice with Germany. They propose to keep something like 160,000 men in the Middle East as a general strategic reserve, which incidentally will also be available to keep order if there should be trouble in Palestine or Syria. I was glad to find out that the Chiefs of Staff are not contemplating retaining any Indian troops, except possibly a few in Persia, for that purpose,[3]

[1] Not printed. [2] Code name given to the plan to recapture Rangoon from the sea.
[3] [Note in original:] i.e. strategic reserve.

and as you know the Indian Divisions in Italy are now earmarked for Eastern operations, though of course it is still uncertain when they will get away or when those operations can begin. It seems to me very difficult to imagine that they can really be effectively set in motion by March. On the other hand, some of the Indian troops may be remaining in the Middle East for the first few months after the German armistice, and I drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that if local trouble occurred in Palestine during that time it was very undesirable to use Indian troops, certainly in the active repression of disorders, as contrasted with the more passive defence of railway communications, etc. I also spoke in that sense to Gort, who fully realises the point. At the same time, I am not sure that India is not apt to be a little over-nervous on that question. In the last war we had the full blast of the Khilafat agitation in India, which did not prevent Indian troops, Muslims included, fighting most effectively against the Turks, who were then still definitely Muslim and ruled by a Sultan who was also Khalifa.

5. I have just received your further reminder telegram[4] about food. The Chiefs of Staff made some days ago a definite recommendation[5] that 300,000 tons should be shipped to India in the last quarter of the year. While this is not the comprehensive six months or nine months figure that you would have liked, it is at any rate an improvement on the last quarter's allocation, and there ought to be a point at which regular arrivals should begin to create a confident expectation that they will continue and therefore exercise a steadying influence on the situation. Unfortunately, Winston is away and I gather that Attlee, instead of coming to an immediate decision himself, wants me to secure the agreement of the members of the Foodgrains Committee before I can let you know. I only hope that I may secure that this afternoon or tomorrow.

6. I have had the opportunity to see a semi-private letter from Dr. Coyne, who is advising on storage and pest control of foodgrains, which is certainly disquieting. He states emphatically that the ports are having serious difficulty in handling imports on the present level, and that if by any chance we had been able to make available the 500,000 tons of foodgrains for which the Gregory Report[6] asked as a reserve, in addition to the one million tons for current consumption, the claim for which is being so continuously reiterated in India, you would have had nowhere in which to store it, and that losses would have been extremely high, amounting to at least 20 per cent. He comments that losses in Bengal of stored grain are appalling owing to the chaotic state of storage and stocks and the great dearth of technical knowledge of grain handling. He appreciates the difficulties in securing the type of man required, but considers that energetic action must be taken immediately.

If the state of affairs is at all as described by Dr. Coyne, and if in due course it becomes known—as it can hardly fail to—to my colleagues, I am very

apprehensive lest the tale of substantial losses due to inefficient storing may gravely prejudice the presentation of your case for increased imports.

[Para. 7, on the welfare of troops in India; para. 8, on medical experts for the Bhore Committee; and para. 9, on a letter received from Col. E. Wickham, M.P., omitted.]

10. In your letter of 1st August[7] you refer to the question of inward censorship, and I am glad that you take the view that, generally speaking, it is undesirable to stop messages which sooner or later will reach India through British or American newspapers and periodicals. As you say, it is out of the question to lay down any rigid rules, and I fully realise the difficulties of your censorship staff, particularly in dealing with press messages from this country of Indian correspondents, which invariably have a nasty political flavour about them or those from America which get to India in most cases probably just because they have that flavour. But unless some clear question of security is involved, or a message is of a character calculated so gravely to affect Indian morale and the maintenance of law and order that its suppression for a time at any rate, till the danger is passed, is [a] necessity it seems to me that in the long run the Government of India stand to gain very much in relation to British and American opinion by as liberal a censorship policy as possible.

11. While on the question of censorship, I might add that I have just seen an advance copy sent by Puckle of a memorandum[8] concocted by himself, Hennessy and the B.I.S. dealing with the adverse effects on American opinion of the conduct of your *outward* censorship. I understand that the idea is that, if Bajpai agrees, he should transmit it to you with his comments, and simultaneously the B.I.S. will send a copy to the Ministry of Information, so that it will no doubt come under official consideration later on. The memorandum underlines the point which I tried to bring out in our official correspondence on the subject earlier in the year—that there is no doubt that the unhappy reputation of the Indian outward censorship, whether or not in the past deserved, has had a chronically bad effect on public opinion outside India, particularly in the U.S.A., because the public mind comes to doubt the authenticity, or at any rate the completeness, of any news leaving India.

[4] 1605–S of 23 August. L/E/8/3324. [5] No. 668. [6] See No. 197, note 2. [7] No. 617.
[8] Not printed.

673

Sir A. Hope (Madras) to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell (Extract)

L/P&J/5/207: f 69

SECRET MADRAS GOVERNOR'S CAMP, GUINDY, *27 August 1944*

No. 8/1944

2. Political interest during the month has centred on the publication of your correspondence[1] with Gandhi, and on the now postponed meeting of Gandhi and Jinnah.

3. Comment on the correspondence has been on party lines, but I think publication has done good in making it clear, as you say, that after the Cripps Offer, we have nothing more to offer. Indian politicians have spent so many years demanding always a little more and a little more and sometimes getting it, that they find difficulty in adjusting themselves to a situation where we can offer no more.

4. The postponement of the Gandhi–Jinnah meeting has been something of an anti-climax. The official Congress view here supports, with some misgiving, anything Gandhi says or does, but Rajagopalachari is distrusted.

[1] See Nos. 614 and 659.

674

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery (Extract)

L/PO/10/21

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *28 August 1944*

PRIVATE AND SECRET

Many thanks for your letter of the 16th August.[1] I was interested in what you say in paragraphs 1 to 4, and agree with you about Winston's attitude towards a solution of the Indian problem, he has no intention of helping it on; in fact there does not seem to me to be anyone in the Cabinet who really does, except yourself and Cripps; and Cripps won't stand up to Winston. And yet, oddly enough, the Hindu press, while it regards you and Winston as the joint villains of the piece, treats you as the worse villain of the two. The tone of my reply[2] to Gandhi has caused a good deal of harm and has rallied to him some support that he was in danger of losing. But the first reactions in the press are now over, and politically the week has been quiet. The general principle, that we will not on any account play with Gandhi on his present proposals, has had a good deal

of approval from sensible Indians. No date has yet been announced for the meeting between Gandhi and Jinnah, though it is now expected to take place in the first week in September. In the meantime Mahasabha leaders and the Liberals are busy pointing out that there is not much object in a communal settlement, with the British determined to obstruct all progress. I was glad to see that the idea commonly, and perhaps genuinely, held that we have gone back on the Cripps offer was contradicted in a sensible leader in the *Times of India* a few days ago. Low, who was himself slightly shaken, got Reuters people here to make some enquiries from my Staff, and used the information given to good effect. The *Hindustan Times* has, however, returned to the charge.

2. I also have spent some time on Beverley Nichols' book,[3] an advance copy of which came out in the last bag. I think it mischievous, the more so that it contains a few truths, a number of three-quarters truths, and a great many half-truths. Whatever one may think of Nichols as a writer, there is no doubt about his appeal to a large class of people at home and in the U.S.A. The Indian journalists who baited him in Bombay had probably never heard of his earlier books, some of which must have had an enormous circulation, and failed to realise that he could "turn on the heat" in a manner most unpleasant to them. In spite of the disclaimer at the beginning, people here will certainly believe that Nichols had official support, and even that he was sponsored by His Majesty's Government. When he came out to India, it was not easy to get a passage of any kind. He stayed at Viceroy's House twice, and saw a good deal of the senior officials both here and in the Provinces. I am asking the Home Department to advise on the book, and we may have to prohibit its circulation in India. On a very long view, books of this kind may, I suppose, do good; but when one is trying to work up to a political settlement in an atmosphere of racial and communal bitterness, they can only do harm. I have met Nichols once or twice, he is quite pleasant in rather a maiden-auntish way, but like many maiden aunts obviously has a tongue—and pen.

* * *

5. I have just had a telegram[4] from you about Hill's Final Report.[5] As it was despatched by the air mail of 25th August, it cannot arrive for some days, and I will let you know as soon as possible after I have seen it what the view here is about publication. Hill went down very well indeed in India, but has had a less favourable press since he left. He is supposed to be associated with His Majesty's Government's sinister design for putting politics into cold storage and concentrating on economic development.

6. I am sorry there is no decision yet about food imports, and I have just had your private telegram[6] saying that there is difficulty in securing an adequate

[1] No. 664. [2] No. 659. [3] See No. 664, note 3. [4 and 5] L/E/8/2612.
[6] 693 Guard of 26 August. L/PO/10/18.

quantity of wheat from Australia. I very much hope that you will be able to give me a definite and satisfactory decision within the next week or two. I was told on very good authority some five or six months ago that Australia had a million tons surplus, but His Majesty's Government has dallied for so long that perhaps it has been dissipated.

Woodhead has got down to work in a businesslike way, and is publishing regular Press Notes. Criticism of the hearings being *in camera* has died down.

My intelligence people report discontent in Iraq owing to His Majesty's Government's failure to take up a considerable surplus of barley (250,000 tons). Apparently the Embassy are much concerned, and mention the matter in their reports. We cannot do anything to help here, as, apart from the Iraqi prices, which are exorbitant, our capacity to consume barley is limited.

7. I have been discussing with Caroe the possibility of employing more Indians in diplomatic posts abroad, particularly in Persia and Afghanistan. Sooner or later India will have to run her own Foreign Service, and it is most desirable that we should gradually build up a cadre of Indian officials with diplomatic training. The main snag about posting Indians to British Embassies or Legations seems to be the tenderness of the Foreign Office about security. Your telegram No. 377 of 14th April 1943,[7] which deals with a proposal to post an Indian as First Secretary of Teheran, brings this point out. I doubt if there is very much in the objection. Senior Indian officials of the kind likely to be selected are quite reliable, and apart from this, there will be no need for them to concern themselves with the working of the cypher system. Our Agents-General both at Washington and Chungking are part of the Embassy Staff, and make use of the cypher arrangements at the Embassy. It is true that an Indian working in, and not merely attached to, an Embassy would see much more of the current work of the Embassy itself; but, as I have said above, the type of man selected would, in my opinion, be quite reliable. Squire has suggested that an Indian officer of the Indian Political Service should go to Kabul as First Secretary when Connor Green leaves, and I shall be grateful if you will let me know if this proposal is likely to go through. The bulk of the Kabul telegrams come and go in India Office cyphers, and the Minister holds only the Inter-departmental and R. Codes. At Teheran, on the other hand, Foreign Office cyphers are almost exclusively used.

* * *

11. I am told that serious difficulty is being caused by the complete absence from the Indian markets of infant foods. This affects seriously not only the British population but also ordinary middle-class Indian households. The latter often find it difficult or impossible to get reliable fresh milk and though they prefer this if they can be sure of it, they often give their young children infant foods. There has been a good deal of telegraphic correspondence on the subject,

our latest telegram from Commerce Department being dated August 16th.[8] French also has telegraphed home emphasising the seriousness of the matter. If there is anything you can do to secure supplies for us, I shall be most grateful.

12. I am in the middle of the Governors' Conference, and shall be glad to get away to Simla for a bit on Saturday.

7 and 8 Not printed.

675

Mr Eden to the Earl of Halifax

Telegram, L/P&S/12/4629: f 209

IMMEDIATE FOREIGN OFFICE, *30 August 1944, 10 pm*
DEDIP
SECRET

No. 7719. Your telegrams Nos. 4629,[1] 4630[2] and 4633[3] (of August 28th and 29th: William Phillips).

I have now seen press reports of Senator Chandler's iteration in the Senate of Drew Pearson's allegations. I realise that in Washington this may do him more harm than good, but we have also to consider credence that both are likely to obtain in other parts of the United States, and I regret that in view of strength of our case and of President Roosevelt having recently stigmatised Pearson, you did not feel able to make general comment that his article was inaccurate in almost every statement.

2. In your telegram No. 4305,[4] you reported Mr. Stettinius's undertaking to see that Pearson's article and our desiderata were brought to the attention of the President on his or Mr. Hull's return to Washington. Had action been taken by the Administration then, it might have prevented the Senator posing as champion of the President's personal representative. I would like you to approach the United States authorities at a high level as soon as possible with a view to getting from the United States Government a public statement (*a*) repudiating comprehensively the allegations that concern our two Governments (State

1 In this tel. Lord Halifax sent Mr Eden the text of a further article published by Mr Pearson in which it was alleged that the British Government had asked for the recall of Mr Phillips from General Eisenhower's staff in London and the recall of Mr Merrell from New Delhi. R/30/1/4: ff 2–4.
2 In this tel. Lord Halifax informed Mr Eden of the State Department's Press statement denying that it had received a request from H.M.G. for Mr Phillips' resignation. L/P&S/12/4629: f 175.
3 In this tel. Lord Halifax sent Mr Eden the text of two United Press messages on Senator Chandler's speech in the U.S. Senate. R/30/1/4: f 1.
4 L/P&S/12/4629: f 243.

Department denial as reported in press seems to us inadequate), and (*b*) disclaiming Phillips' views on the three points in my telegram No. 6837.[5] Depending on degree of your success in this, we think that you should consider issuing yourself something that will command wide attention, and we think that your correction should be directed to the Senator rather than to Pearson. Apart from his allegation that we had asked for Phillips' recall and declared him *persona non grata*, he seems to have suggested that we wished to prevent Phillips reporting fully to the United States Government. We have of course never questioned nor interfered with Phillips' right to report. Our objection to Phillips' report (as distinct from its consequences) was not so much to what he said as to the publication in the press of a confidential report of this character. We can very well stand by our telegram No. 6837, and the incident may even afford an opportunity of publicising in a positive and forceful way the three points in Phillips' letter to which we took exception.

[5] Of 1 August. The three points specified in this tel. were: (1) the morale of the Indian Army, (2) the British rôle in the war against Japan, (3) Mr Churchill's statement on the application of the Atlantic Charter to India. *Ibid.*: f 248.

676

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/10/21

PRIVATE AND TOP SECRET INDIA OFFICE, *31 August 1944*
Received: 9 September

I am truly disappointed by the last minute difficulty which has cropped up over the wheat situation. As I told you in my last letter,[1] the Chiefs of Staff recommended shipping 300,000 tons from Australia in the last quarter, to which Leathers felt bound to add a rider that some of this might have to be diverted to the Balkans if we found ourselves in occupation there and confronted with an immediate famine situation. Leathers did express some doubts as to whether Australia could continue supplying in the future on the same scale as in the past, but I did not gather that he thought it would affect the immediate shipments under consideration.

2. The Ministry of Food then, however, weighed in with their difficulties over Australia, in the first instance laying stress, not so much on actual prospective shortage, as on the fact that Australia was trying to stand out for an unreasonably high price. From that point of view they were only concerned that any public statement should not refer specifically to Australia. Yesterday, however, when I had a further conference with Leathers and Llewellin, Llewellin reported that he had just been meeting the Australian Wheat Board,

who said that in view of the unfavourable prospects of the present crop in Australia they were not prepared to enter upon any contract for wheat, at any rate until mid-November, when they will know how they stand with regard to the crop. That of course, immediately brought Leathers into the picture with his very strong objections to shipping wheat from Canada or the Argentine, which involves twice as much shipping for wheat carried. In the upshot, we decided that the first thing to do was to approach the Australian Government on a higher level in order to override the apprehensions of the Australian Wheat Board, which we in fact consider exaggerated. Accordingly, Leathers and Llewellin are tackling Bruce, the High Commissioner today, to get him to send an urgent telegram to his Government. I can only hope that the result of this will be that the Australian Government will agree that at any rate the 300,000 tons required for the last quarter of this year can be shipped. If that position cannot be secured, then I fear I am in for a difficult, and possibly protracted, struggle in the Cabinet in order to secure the 300,000 tons, or as near that amount as possible, from whatever sources are available.

3. All this must, I know, be very embarrassing for you, both from the point of view of the actual needs of the situation, and also from that of handling Srivastava and the rest of your Council. I can only hope that the actual situation in India is now better than you feared two or three months ago and that you can somehow or other carry through with whatever we can secure you at this end. My own strongest argument throughout has been and must be that wheat is in fact a military requirement of the first order and that, whether it is not available for the troops, or whether its non-availability for the civil population brings about a standstill of India's effective co-operation in the war effort, in either event we can no more afford not to send the wheat than we can afford not to send troops or munitions.

4. In paragraph 10 of my letter of June 13th/15th,[2] I remarked on the disturbing increase in crimes of violence during the war and on your intention to keep in closer touch with the situation by means of periodical returns. I have now seen the first of these returns, for the quarter ending June 30th, forwarded with your Home Department's letter No. 174/41/44–Police[3] of August 1st, which also enclosed an interesting note commenting on the figures. I am glad to see both the improved method for bringing serious crime to notice and the recovery in the crime figures themselves. The connection between the crime situation and the economic—especially food—conditions in the various Provinces is very noticeable.

5. I have received your letter No. F.681/2/G.G./43[4] of August 9th about the Indian States and it is being considered here. Meanwhile I agree with you that

[1] No. 672. [2] No. 537. [3] L/P & J/7/6706. [4] No. 634.

your meeting with the Princely representatives, which I learn from paragraph 5 of your private letter of August 1st[5] is to be held on September 15th and 16th, will not be a convenient occasion for any frank examination of the position of the Princes in relation to a future Union of India; and that it will be best to stand on what was said in Fitze's letter of January 4th, 1943,[6] to the Pro-Chancellor.

6. I was interested in the reference in paragraph 2 of your letter to the cleavage which has grown up in the Chamber of Princes between the medium sized and the smaller States. On the other hand, I see that the statement which His Highness of Bikaner issued to the Press on August 10th indicated that at recent meetings of the Standing Committee the Princes had unanimously agreed that they did not consider themselves separate from the rest of India or from India's destiny of independence. On this occasion at any rate the representatives of the smaller States on the Standing Committee seem to have departed from the policy of claiming protection for their Treaty position *à outrance* to the extent of paying some lip-service to the theme of a united India.

7. On the question of industrialisation in the States, you will probably not wish to do more than take note of the Princes' desiderata.

8. I see Jinnah has now graciously condescended to meet Gandhi after the 7th. Like you, I don't think much will come of it this time. All the same, I think it is to the good that the ice has been to some extent broken between the two extreme points of view and I dare say the subject will be talked up and down India for months to come. I was grateful to you for sending me the charming cartoon by Shankar in which you act as the firing squad for two very recognisable ruffians standing behind. As a matter of fact, the reply to Gandhi which caused us so much anxiety seems to have gone down better than I expected, no doubt overshadowed by greater events elsewhere.

No.

W.

9. By the way, I confess I rather agree with Arthur Hope and those Governors who deprecate the formal closing of Government offices in the event of Gandhi's death. As Hope points out,[7] it will upset many of the opponents of Congress, apart from the Muslims, and would create an awkward precedent in favour of Jinnah. I should have thought the best thing was to have carried on as usual, but to have done nothing to officials who individually stayed away.

10. A nasty fellow in America, Senator Chandler, has created a sensation by saying that we asked for Phillips' resignation as a *persona non grata*, and a good deal else of the same sort. I hope the Embassy in Washington will come out with a really strong contradiction, though what is even more important is that the State Department should do the same.

[Para. 11, on criticisms of the Bombay Disaster Report, omitted.]

12. You mention in paragraph 7 of your letter of August 15th[8] that you and Casey were inclined to think that Rowlands might be the best man to deal with the question of Bengal Administration. You said you would telegraph about this, but as you have not done so up to date I suppose you may be thinking otherwise. Anyhow, I shall no doubt hear from you before long what Casey's and your final conclusions may be.

13. In paragraph 11 of the same letter you ask why the Cabinet decided to postpone the consideration of Bajpai's status for six months. I am afraid there was no logic in the decision at all; but as the Prime Minister suggested something to that effect, I accepted, in preference to having the thing turned down definitely and finally, as it would have been otherwise. There is always something to be said for the policy of the importunate widow and I might get more support six months hence, while if there should be a change of government the matter would then come up automatically.

[5] No. 617. [6] See Vol. III, No. 309, note 4.
[7] In a letter dated 19 June 1944. L/P&J/7/851. [8] No. 660.

Appendix

A. Reconsideration of the Channels of Communication between the Secretary of State for India and the Viceroy, August–November 1943

Note by Mr Turnbull[1]

L/PO/11/6: ff 131–4

Undated

NOTE ON CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE VICEROY

1. At present there are the following types of telegrams:—

(1) S/S to Govt. of India, Department of .....
(2) S/S to Governor-General (in some cases with Department—e.g. Reforms or Public)
(3) S/S to Crown Representative (with or without "Political Department")
(4) S/S to Viceroy—Personal
(5) S/S to Viceroy—Private and personal.

Category (4) above was introduced after the 1935 Act had come into operation. But its function has never been properly defined and mutually agreed.

2. The necessity for a category of telegrams between official and private and personal telegrams arose with the introduction of the new Act. At the outset of his Viceroyalty Lord Linlithgow began to deal with all matters arising out of the powers of the Secretary of State and Governor-General under [Sections] 54 and 314 of the Act by private and personal communications, both to S/S and to the Governors. The S/S demurred against this practice[2] because:

(1) this correspondence dealt with the discharge of statutory functions and as such must be official in the sense that it must remain on record after the correspondents left office and in the sense that it must be producible if a demand were made by Parliament or the Cabinet for the production of Papers.

(2) Private and personal correspondence should in essence be of the nature of comment or information personal to the authors and not remain on *official* record or be essential to the completeness of official records. Moreover private and personal correspondence is by tradition and by virtue of the word private the property of the authors and is taken away by them when they leave office.

Lord Linlithgow however argued that it was essential that his correspondence on political matters with Governors and with the S/S should be entirely free

from inhibitions and said that he intended to conduct it personally. Ultimately in a letter dated 11th August 1940[3] Lord Linlithgow agreed to the following position:—

(1) The category Private or Private and Personal should be confined to the smallest possible limits, but the proposition that all correspondence about official matters should be such as would immediately or ultimately go on official record was not acceptable. The Viceroy considered that it was essential "that in the interests of public business there should remain a channel of communication of such a character that the Viceroy and the Secretary of State can each express his views in complete freedom without the apprehension that the views or suggestions would necessarily go on official record at some later stage—it being clearly understood that those views and suggestions would be confined to preliminary soundings."

(2) that telegrams marked personal would be for practical purposes official, and would either immediately or ultimately go on official record either in the Governor-General's personal or public secretariat or in a Department of the Government of India. The effect would be that such telegrams would come in the first instance, on receipt, to the Secretary of State or Viceroy so that each could secure an appropriate, and if desired a limited circulation for them.

These arrangements have been more honoured in the breach than in fulfilment, and since 1940 a large volume of private and personal telegrams on a wide range of subjects has passed. Admittedly the difficulties are all in India and may have increased with the Indianisation of Council, but from the India Office angle what we should like to have is an arrangement as follows:

(1) Apart from official correspondence with the Departments of the Government of India and the Crown Representative ((1) and (3) in paragraph 1) there should be:

(1) *Official correspondence between the S/S and* Governor-General (not marked personal).

This should cover inter alia:—

(*a*) Correspondence about political matters arising out of s. 54 and 314 of the Act, i.e. the control of the proceedings of Governors in so far as they do not act on the advice of Ministers;

(*b*) the exercise of the discretionary functions of the Governor-General;

(*c*) matters relating to the constitutional position;

(*d*) matters which are within the competence of the Governor-General in Council but in regard to which the question of using the Governor-General's overriding authority under s. 41 (2) of the 9th Schedule arises.

1 Attached to a minute dated 13 August 1943 from Mr Turnbull to Mr Patrick, Mr Baxter and Sir D. Monteath. L/PO/11/6.

2 and 3 Copies of this correspondence are *ibid.*

(2) *Official correspondence marked S/S to Viceroy.*

This would include correspondence and information (of which there is at present a great deal) which is supplied to the Viceroy by virtue of his position but not directly necessary for the discharge of his statutory functions:—

(1) telegrams conveying information about the progress of the war;

(2) telegrams conveying general information about Empire and Foreign Policy;

(3) correspondence dealing with the Viceroy's extra-statutory functions delegated by H.M.G., e.g. relations with S.E.A. Command and British Government agencies operating in India.

(3) *Private and Personal telegrams addressed to*

(a) *Governor-General* (b) *Viceroy*
(c) *Crown Representative*

These would be divided between (a) and (b) and (c) according as their subject matter fell into the official sphere of (1) or (2) above.

It would be at the discretion of the S/S and Viceroy how far extracts from such communications would be left on record, but the assumption would be that this discretion would be exercised sparingly. It may well be found necessary to use this channel for preliminary correspondence on matters falling under (1) and (2) but *on any such matter* the official correspondence should be a complete record of what is actually done, and the private and personal correspondence an off the record supplement. Matters which clearly fall in this category are:—

(1) discussions about candidates for Governorships.
(2) correspondence revealing tendencies of discussions in Cabinet or in the Viceroy's Council.
(3) *Suggestions* as to honours. Actual recommendations for the grant of honours should be official from Governor-General to Secretary of State.
(4) All correspondence regarding high personalities and their relationships or abilities.

If a lay-out of this kind is adopted it is doubtful whether the label Personal is required. It would be understood that all the above categories would go to the Viceroy's Cypher Bureau, and it is assumed that if the distinction drawn above between telegrams to Governor-General and Viceroy were drawn, the latter would be restricted to the minimum. Prefixes as "most secret" or "for yourself alone" could be employed to ensure secrecy and limited circulation. So far as the India Office is concerned "personal" telegrams are regarded as official and are dealt with in the departments of the Office concerned and placed on record there. It may however be useful to retain it as a prefix to official telegrams which it is particularly desired to bring to the Governor-General's immediate notice

and, if this would be helpful in India, we shall be glad to continue to use it for that purpose. It has one valuable use. There may be matters being dealt with officially with *Departments* of the Government of India as distinct from the Governor-General to which it may be desired to draw the Governor-General's attention at some particular stage—for example to urge expedition or press some particular consideration. Such telegrams may not always be suitable to be shown to Members of Council. It might be appropriate in some cases to do this by [a] private and personal but in many it would be quite suitable to do it officially and the proper means seems to be the Secretary of State to Governor-General channel. If there would be advantage in distinguishing such telegrams by marking them "personal" in addition to addressing them to Governor-General it would be worth while retaining the label.

There are one or two doubtful cases. For example, there have been copious private and personal communications on such matters as:—

(1) appointments to the Governor-General's Council. These could from our point of view quite well be official from S/S to Governor-General, but conditions in India may require that they be private and personal.
(2) the question of further Indianisation of the Viceroy's Council. There would seem no reason why this should not have been official.

There has during the last 15 years, and especially during the present Viceroyalty, been a tendency to argue that exploratory discussion regarding the main political questions should be "private and personal" in order that their non-committal and sounding character may be emphasised. This practice has had unfortunate results. Correspondence on major issues such as the Communal Award[4] and many important constitutional issues is not on record. There seems no reason why, as between the Governor-General and Secretary of State, correspondence of a tentative kind should not be official and recorded. The processes of thought by which decisions are reached are often of subsequent value.

LETTERS

Apart from formal despatches there are two types of letters which pass between the Secretary of State and the Viceroy.

Official Letters. These are usually confined to a particular [? matter] of official business and the Viceroy's letters are [distin]guished by serial numbers in the H.E. series. These [lette]rs are not private and are comparable to Governor-General [offic]ial telegram[s].

Private and personal letters. It is a long standing practice [? for] the Secretary of State and the Viceroy to correspond [reg]ularly on a private and personal basis. The content of this [co]rrespondence varies in different régimes but its main utility is

[4] See No. 459, note 3.

(*a*) to give general expression to the way in which minds are working on current problems;
(*b*) to provide a mail channel by which not urgent matters of the class dealt with by private and personal telegrams can be disposed of.

The practice is, at both ends, for discretion to be used as to the making of extracts from these letters for official record. In India such record is I think confined to the Governor-General's secretariat, though extracts may on occasion be shown to officers in Departments. It is certainly desirable for this practice to continue on the assumption that care is exercised to ensure that only comment on official matters remains on record. The letters as a whole are seen here only by the Private Secretaries and the Permanent Under Secretary. They are the property of the recipient and author and the Secretary of State has them bound and takes them away when he leaves office.

Sir E. Jenkins to Secretaries to the Government of India and the Secretary, Political Department[5]

L/PO/11/6: f 72

D.-o. No. 609–G.G.–43

THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *11 November 1943*

MY DEAR ——,

Discussions have been going on for some time with the India Office about the possibility of simplifying the classification of telegrams between the Viceroy through his own Cypher Branch and the Secretary of State. In the past the following categories have been recognised:—

(*i*) Official telegrams, which have no prefix, and which are ordinary official communications between the Viceroy and the Secretary of State:
(*ii*) Personal telegrams which are commonly regarded as official, and in which the prefix "Personal" is used as an indication that they are to be shown on receipt to the Secretary of State or the Viceroy as the case may be:
(*iii*) Private or Private and Personal telegrams which are not official and are not [to] be placed on record with official papers or referred to in official correspondence.

It has been agreed that in future telegrams shall be classified only as "Official" or "Private": the "Personal" and "Private and Personal" category will be eliminated. Official telegrams will be those which it is intended to place on official record and to treat as official communications in all respects. In all other telegrams the prefix "Private" will be used and if this prefix is not included in a telegram it will be treated as official. As the "Personal" channel was frequently

used to reinforce Official telegrams from the departments in India it has been decided, now that the "Personal" category is no longer available, to include in telegrams from the India Office which the Secretary of State desires the Viceroy to see the words "His Excellency the Viceroy should see",[6] and in telegrams from the Government of India approved personally by the Viceroy the words "His Excellency the Viceroy has seen". Telegrams including indications that the Secretary of State wishes the Viceroy to see, or that they have been approved personally by the Viceroy will not lose their official character. The device is intended solely to eliminate or reduce duplication and implies no change of departmental procedure. It has also been decided that when a telegram from the Government of India is based upon a decision in Council this should be made clear.

2. These arrangements have been approved by His Excellency and are of interest to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy rather than to departments of the Government of India. But the following points will require attention in the departments, and His Excellency asks that they be noted:

(*a*) Incoming telegrams to departments including the indication "His Excellency the Viceroy should see" should be communicated immediately to the Private Secretary to the Viceroy for submission to His Excellency, and His Excellency will ordinarily desire to see, in draft, the reply to any such telegram.

(*b*) In submitting the drafts of outgoing telegrams for His Excellency's approval the departments should include at the end the words "His Excellency the Viceroy has seen".

(*c*) Telegrams based on decisions in Council whether seen in draft by His Excellency or not should state clearly that they are based on Council decisions.

(*d*) Although Private telegrams are comparatively seldom sent or received by Hon'ble Members and officers of the departments of the Government of India, the India Office asks that if the private channel is used departmentally the word "Private" be placed *after* the second name, e.g., "Caroe to Peel. Private". This is to ensure that the telegrams are properly distributed at the India Office.

3. The new procedure between my office and the India Office will be introduced immediately.

Yours sincerely,

E. M. JENKINS

5 A circular in similar terms was distributed in the India Office. L/PO/11/6.

6 In correspondence between Mr Abell and Mr Turnbull in December 1945 it was made clear that the formula 'Viceroy should see' was properly applicable only to official telegrams to Departments of the Government of India or to the Crown Representative's Department because the Viceroy saw all official telegrams addressed to himself in any case. L/PO/11/6: ff 17–22.

B. Examination of the Practice of Viceroys, Secretaries of State and Governors taking away their Private Correspondence when leaving office, January–August 1944

Mr Amery to Field Marshal Viscount Wavell

L/PO/11/6: ff 31–2

PRIVATE INDIA OFFICE, *20 June 1944*

I have been considering the question of private correspondence being taken away by Viceroys and Governors on leaving office which you referred to in paragraph 7 of your letter of the 8th January.[7]

2. I am in full agreement with the decisions which you took in regard to Lady Mary Herbert's request to be supplied with *material which could be used to defend Herbert's reputation if it came under criticism*,[8] and whatever may be felt about private correspondence, it seems to me quite plain that the records and discussions of provincial Cabinets and of the Viceroy's Executive Council must be regarded as official documents not to be made available to or taken away by the participants after leaving office. In actual fact Lady Mary has not raised the matter here at all; but the general point remains that if a Governor—or the Governor-General for that matter—were permitted to take away with him the whole or extracts from the records of "Cabinet" meetings, the same privilege could hardly be denied to Members of Council and Ministers, and this would be the end of all secrecy in regard to Cabinet discussions.

3. As regards Secretaries of State and Viceroys, it has been the custom, so far as I can ascertain for all time, for the Secretary of State and the Viceroy on leaving office to take away with them copies of the great bulk at any rate of their private correspondence, including private telegrams and secret cypher telegrams (known as "U" telegrams). Records here show that all Secretaries of State back to the time of Birkenhead have done this, and the recollection of members of my staff who were concerned is that earlier Secretaries of State also did so. We have no record here of what Viceroys have done, but I feel sure that they have done much the same. Of course, this practice originated at a time when private correspondence was of a more personal and restricted nature than it has become in recent years. From the time of Sam Hoare's régime, when big constitutional changes began to be discussed, private correspondence was expanded enormously and has come to cover a wide sphere of important matters of policy. I think there is no doubt that since then and particularly while Linlithgow was in office, the private channel came to be used for matters which were the subject of strictly personal consultation between the two participants but which ought really to have been dealt with by official communications. Such blurring of the border line is natural and perhaps inevitable, for it does seem to me essential that the Viceroy and the Secretary of State at

any rate should be able to correspond with entire freedom by private correspondence in regard to important matters of policy, without being committed to placing what they say in a tentative way, or even just "thinking aloud", to one another on permanent record, or making it available to their successors in office, who, as far as Secretaries of State go at any rate, may be their violent political opponents.

4. The case of correspondence between the Viceroy and Provincial Governors is a little different because of the degree of official subordination of the latter to the former. Linlithgow originally took the view[9] that his correspondence with the Governors should all be of a private character; but Zetland protested that the correspondence between the Viceroy and Governors regarding the exercise of the Viceroy's control over them under Section 54 of the Act was official correspondence and should not be marked "Private". On the other hand, Zetland accepted that this correspondence would be more appropriately recorded separately since it would deal with matters such as a Governor's discretionary functions and his attitude towards his Ministers, which, though official, involved the personal instructions of the Governor-General.

5. From the correspondence which is on record here, it is clear that Linlithgow quite appreciated the dangers which Zetland pointed out of correspondence dealing with matters arising out of his powers under Section 54 of the Act becoming the private property of the senders and recipients through being marked "Private". In a circular letter to Governors of the 24th August 1937, Linlithgow said that as a general rule all correspondence which arose out of Section 54 or Section 314 of the Act should be marked either "Confidential" or "Secret" according to its character, with the consequence that "I should not regard myself as entitled to remove any of this correspondence when I myself relinquished office and that it would remain on permanent if confidential record in the Office of the Secretary to the Governor-General." He then went on to say that there would fall into the private category matters such as recommendations for honours or appointments, and correspondence which, though having some connection with their official duties, is in the strict sense private and personal to the writer or the recipient being by nature unsuited to and not required for official record. I rather suspect, however, that as with the Secretary of State, Linlithgow did in his relations with the Governors allow a very wide interpretation of the proper sphere of private correspondence and that a great deal of the day-to-day discussion about relations with Ministers and so forth was conducted in this way. It is very difficult to draw a hard and fast line: and particularly to say what may properly and what should not be removed.

7 No. 310.
8 The words in italics are missing from the letter as sent and have been taken from the draft.
9 The correspondence mentioned in this and the following para. is on L/PO/11/6.

Provided that they are clearly marked "Secret" and are treated accordingly till with the lapse of time their secrecy evaporates, I should myself be inclined to hold, provided also that copies at any rate of everything that may form a useful precedent are left on record in the "Private" Offices of the Viceroy and the Governor respectively, that there is no good ground for refusing permission to either to take away with him such correspondence of a genuinely personal character as bears on his own personal activities in the discharge of his official responsibility. I should imagine that in practice few Governors, other than the "political" Governors of Bombay, Madras and Bengal, would have any wish to take any away.

6. As regards our own private correspondence it seems to me that for the future we should do our best to avoid any abuse of the private category of correspondence and instead try to confine it to its proper purpose of personal consultation on personal—and sometimes ephemeral—comment on matters of current official concern the definitive correspondence on which is on official record. If this were done it would reduce to a large extent the risks of untoward results from private correspondence being taken away by the Secretary of State or the Viceroy. That there are risks I do not deny, but it seems to me very difficult to require that Secretaries of State should leave their private correspondence with the Viceroy on record for their successors and equally difficult to expect that they should agree to its destruction when the possession of it might be of considerable importance to them in justifying their own reputations against subsequent attack. There is no doubt that since 1927 Secretaries of State and Viceroys have taken away correspondence which is of great secrecy and the publication of some of which might be very embarrassing; but after all we are dealing with responsible people and I do not think that any serious embarrassment has hitherto resulted from this practice. I should be disposed myself, therefore, to let the practice continue, but to aim at reducing the risks by keeping private correspondence within its proper limits.

7. As Jenkins knows, the new personal functions falling on the Viceroy and Governors under the 1935 Act led to a fusing of official and private correspondence to disentangle which a new category of "personal" correspondence was evolved with Linlithgow. This refinement failed of its purpose; and I think that an improvement has resulted from the attempt, concerted with Jenkins before you went out, to revert to a clean dichotomy. But it is not always easy to preserve it in day-to-day practice!

Field Marshal Viscount Wavell to Mr Amery

L/PO/11/6: f 30

PRIVATE THE VICEROY'S HOUSE, NEW DELHI, *8 July 1944*

D.O. No. F. 744/GG/43

My dear Amery,

Many thanks for your letter of 20th June about private correspondence.

2. I agree that both the Viceroy and Governors should be permitted if they wish to take away all correspondence of a genuinely personal character provided:—

(*a*) that the security of such correspondence is ensured; and
(*b*) that copies of all letters and papers obviously needed for record are left on record.

3. I also entirely agree with you that we should try to avoid abuse of the private category of correspondence. If we could draw the dividing line correctly, it would be possible for either of us to remove all private correspondence and to leave no copies; but the line cannot be drawn with absolute accuracy, and I take it that it will always be open to us, if we wish, to leave some or all of our private correspondence on record for the convenience of our successors.[10]

Yours sincerely,

WAVELL

[10] In his letter of 19 July to Lord Wavell, Mr Amery assumed that the Governors would be informed at an appropriate moment of the sense of para. 2 above. In his letter of 1 August 1944, Lord Wavell replied that he had 'thought it best to mention the matter only to the Governors of the Presidencies, as it is not the general practice for other Governors to take correspondence away, and I do not wish to encourage them to do so.' L/PO/11/6.

Addendum to Section B, October 1945

Sir G. Laithwaite to Mr Turnbull

L/PO/11/6: f 23

NOTE FOR RECORD

31 October 1945

Mr Turnbull

I notice on the file below a reference to the papers taken away by Lord Linlithgow on relinquishing office. I think I ought to make it clear that Lord Linlithgow on relinquishing office took away no official files and no original papers. Everything that was to remain on record was handed over by me to my successor as Secretary to the Governor-General (Personal), and that included a full

set of the private or personal telegrams and letters exchanged between the Viceroy during his term of office and successive Secretaries of State. The convention in regard to these documents is that they are in the custody of the P.S.V.[11] Clearly if use were to be made of certain of them the concurrence of both writer and recipient would have to be obtained.

2. What the Viceroy did take away was a printed copy of letters, etc. which he had exchanged with Governors and with the Secretary of State. But he has no copy of the minuting or of the argument on which any particular paragraph was based and the original drafts, where they were not destroyed at the time, will still be on record with P.S.V.

J. G. L.

[11] A letter from Sir G. Laithwaite to Mr Abell of 13 September 1946 makes it clear that Lord Linlithgow had not specifically authorized this arrangement but that Sir G. Laithwaite had used his own discretion in agreeing with Sir E. Jenkins and Mr Abell to leave a set of the printed volumes of Lord Linlithgow's private Viceregal papers on record in the P.S.V.'s office. MSS EUR.D. 715.

Glossary

ACCHUT An Untouchable.
AKALI *Lit.:* worshipper of the eternal one. Particularly strict devotee of the Sikh faith. In modern usage, the principal Sikh political party.
AMAN Rice grown on low wet ground, sown July–August and reaped in December; winter rice, the main rice crop.
ANNA Unit of money of the value of 1/16 of a RUPEE. 6-Anna crop: colloquial slang signifying a poor crop.
ATTA (ATA) Flour or meal; any grain ground to powder.
AUS Rice, planted February–March, ripening in the rainy season August–September; summer rice.
BAJRA The bulrush millet, a common food-grain.
BANIA Grocer, trader.
BUND An artificial embankment, dam, dyke, causeway.
CHAUDHARI (CHAUDHRI, CHAUDRI) Headman of a profession or trade. A holder of landed property classed with the ZAMINDAR and TALUQDAR.
CHAUKIDAR (CHOWKIDAR) A village watchman; a minor police or customs official.
CIRCAR *See* SARKAR.
CRORE 100 LAKHS or 10 million.
DACOITY Robbery with violence committed by a gang.
DAL Organisation, association.
DARBAR (DURBAR) Court, ceremonial assembly; government of a Princely State.
DETENU Person detained in custody; specifically a political prisoner in India (1918) *O.E.D.*
DEVI *Lit.:* goddess. Used often as a title of respect, and also as a name.
DHAL (DAL) Lentils.
DHOTI A cloth worn by a man round the waist and between or round the legs.
GRAM Chick-pea.
GUARD Code word signifying "For U.K. eyes only".
GUR Raw sugar; unrefined sugar.
GURDWARA Sikh Temple.
HAJ The pilgrimage to Mecca.
IZZAT Honour, credit, reputation, character, prestige.
JAIN Believer in religion differing from Hinduism founded by Vardhamana Mahavira in sixth century B.C.; numerous among bankers and merchants in central and northern India.
JAWAR (JOWAR, JUWAR, JOAR, JUAR) A species of millet which grows to height of 8 to 12 feet, the grain of which enters largely into the food of the peasantry in the western provinces.

KHAKSAR *Lit.:* like the earth, humble. Volunteer organisation of Muslims.
KHARIF Autumn; autumn harvest.
KHILAFAT (CALIPHATE) *Lit.:* deputyship. The office of Caliph, the title adopted by successors of the Prophet in the headship of the Muslim world.
KICHRI (KHICHRI, KEDGEREE) Dish of rice boiled with split pulse and spices; gruel; hence *fig.* any common mixture.
KISAN Peasant.
KUNBI The chief agricultural caste in central, western and southern India whence it sometimes means husbandman, peasant or cultivator in general.
KUTCHA *Lit.:* unripe; imperfect, crude.
LAKH (LAC) 100,000; 100,000 RUPEES.
MAJLIS A Council, assembly or party.
MANDI Market; special market for any particular commodity.
MARATHAS Warrior caste of western India.
MARWARI Strictly, a native of Marwar in Rajputana; often settled elsewhere in India; usually a banker or merchant; loosely used for BANIA.
MAULVI Judge or Doctor of Law. Title of respect often given to learned Muslims.
MAUND A measure of weight varying in different localities; the standard maund is 82·28 lbs.
MIR (MEER) Abbreviation of Amir; title of descendants of the Prophet.
MOFUSSIL Outlying parts of district, province, or presidency, as distinct from chief station or town.
MULLAH Doctor of Islamic law, learned man, teacher, doctor of the law; in India, the term is applied to the man who reads the Koran and also to a Muslim school teacher.
MURDABAD Death to.
NALA (NULLAH) Water-course, channel, gully, creek, drain, ravine.
OVERLORD Code name for Allied invasion of Europe 1944.
PANCHAYAT Court of arbitration (properly of five persons) for determination of petty disputes; village council.
PANTH A path, a sect, a religious order.
PARGANA (PERGANA, PERGUNNAH) A fiscal area; a subdivision of a TAHSIL (Northern India); the 24 Parganas was the official name of the district immediately enclosing Calcutta, ceded to the British 1757.
PIE Unit of money of the value of 1/12th of an ANNA.
PIR *Lit.:* an old man. Thence founder of a religious or mystical sect. The Pir Pagaro was the hereditary leader of the Hurs.
QUAID-E-AZAM The Supreme Leader.
RABI Spring harvest; crop sown after the rains and reaped in the first 3 or 4 months of the year.

RAMZAN (RAMADAN) The ninth month of the Muslim year during which all Muslims fast between sunrise and sunset.
RUPEE Unit of money of the value of 1*s.* 6*d.* in 1942.
RYOT Peasant, cultivating tenant.
SAL *Shorea robusta*; a valuable timber tree resembling teak, common in eastern India.
SANAD Grant, charter, certificate.
SARKAR (SIRCAR, SIRKAR) State, government, chief. Originally a treasury, revenue district or territorial division; in the latter sense often spelt Circar.
SATYAGRAHA *Lit.*: holding on to truth. Total self-giving; integral to Mahatma Gandhi's concept of victory achieved through non-violent resistance.
SATYAGRAHI Participant in SATYAGRAHA.
SEER (SER) 2·057 lbs; 40 sers equals 1 MAUND.
SEXTANT Code name given to the Anglo-American-Chinese Conference at Cairo in November 1943 which preceded the Teheran Conference of 28 November 1943.
SHRIMATI A title of address for married women.
SIKH *Lit.*: disciple. Follower of Guru Nanak (1469–1538), the first of the line of ten leaders (*Gurus*) who formulated the Sikh faith and welded the Sikhs into an independent community. In the face of religious persecution, the Sikhs under the last of the Gurus, Gobind Singh (1666–1708), acquired a formidable military reputation.
SWARAJ (SWARAJYA) Self-rule, independence.
TAHSIL (TEHSIL) A revenue sub-division (approximately 150 villages) of a district.
TALUQDAR A landholder with varying tenures in different parts of India.
TUMANDAR Commander of a district of 10,000 fighting men; chief of a tribe.
YUSUFZAI The name of a powerful tribe of Afghans, and the country they live in, in the Mardan tahsil of Peshawar district.
ZAMINDAR (ZEMINDAR) One holding land as an actual proprietor but paying a fixed annual sum to the Government.
ZINDABAD Long live.

INDEX OF PERSONS WITH BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

FOR THE PERIOD 15 JUNE 1943–31 AUGUST 1944

The extensive correspondence of the Secretary of State (Mr Amery) and the Viceroy (Lord Linlithgow and subsequently Lord Wavell), whether written or telegraphed, can be readily followed in the Summary of Documents at the beginning of the volume and for that reason it is not listed again in this Index.

Neither previous nor subsequent changes in office or title (save where a change of name is involved) are listed unless they have an immediate relevance to the contents of this volume.

The references are to Document Numbers.

ABELL, George Edmond Brackenbury, I.C.S., Deputy Private Secretary to Viceroy since April 1943 8, 22–4, 30, 95, 294, 298, 301, 510, 516, 541, 670.

ACTING GOVERNOR OF BENGAL *see* RUTHERFORD

ADVISER ON PUBLICITY to SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA *see* JOYCE

AGA KHAN, Aga Sultan Sir Mahomed Shah 621

AGARWAL, Shreemant (Shriman) Narayan, Principal, Commerce College, Wardha; an associate of Gandhi at Wardha July 1944 and later 599

AGENT-GENERAL IN WASHINGTON *see* BAJPAI

AHMAD KHAN *see* KHAN, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad

AHMED *see* SULTAN AHMED

AIYAR (AYYAR), Sir C. P. Ramaswami, Diwan of Travancore 213, 333, 344, 370, 664

AJIT SINGH, Sardar, Minister of Public Works, North-West Frontier Province since May 1943 516

ALEXANDER, Albert Victor, M.P. (Co-op) for Sheffield, Hillsborough; First Lord of the Admiralty since 1940 2, 171, 393, 434, 532, 550, 575, 618, 623

ALEXANDER, Horace Gundry, Leader of the Friends' Ambulance Unit in India June 1942–August 1943 247, 381, 508, 670

ALLAHBAKHSH (ALLAH BUX), Khan Bahadur Muhammed Umer; murdered 14 May 1943 6, 26, 226, 268, 574

ALLAMA MASHRIQI *see* INAYATULLAH KHAN

ALLENBY, Field Marshal 1st Viscount (Edmund Henry Hynman; 1861–1936), captured Jerusalem Dec. 1917; Viscount 1919; special High Commissioner for Egypt 1919–25; obtained recognition of Egypt as a sovereign state 1922 4, 15, 280

ALTAF HUSSAIN *see* HUSSAIN, Altaf

AMBEDKAR, Dr Bhimrao Ramji, spokesman for the Depressed classes; Member for Labour, Viceroy's Executive Council since July 1942 110, 238, 278, 450, 454, 504, 507, 600, 607, 670

AMERY, Mrs (*née* Florence Greenwood of Whitby, Ontario), known as Bryddie, wife of L. S. Amery 618

AMERY, John, elder son of L. S. Amery 50

AMERY, Leopold Charles Maurice Stennett, M.P. (Unionist) for Birmingham, Sparkbrook; Secretary of State for India

AMERY, L. S. (*cont.*):
and for Burma since 1940. *See note at head of this Index.* 61, 71, 120, 133, 139, 152, 159–60, 168, 219, 304, 320, 413, 433–4, 453, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629, 641, 653, 659
ANDERSEN, Hans Christian (1805–1875), Danish poet and fabulist 431
ANDERSON, Sir John, M.P. (Nat.) for Scottish Universities; Governor of Bengal 1932–7; Lord President of the Council 1940–3; Chancellor of the Exchequer since 28 Sept. 1943. At War Cabinet 2, 61, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629, 653; on India Committee 120, 152, 159–60, 641; his Governorship of Bengal cited 18, 70, 92; appointment as Chancellor of Exchequer 157; and Commons debate of 4 Nov. 1943 209; and Indian Finances 132, 202, 205, 220, 230, 248, 268, 578, 591, 594, 596, 635; and Finance Membership of Council 246, 260, 268, 270, 281, 286, 290, 298, 305, 307, 325, 331, 334, 346, 369, 371, 390; and Bengal Administrative Enquiry 545, 558, 568, 580; *also* 336–7
ANDREWS, the Reverend Charles Freer (1871–1940), of the Cambridge Brotherhood, Delhi; associate of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa and later 226, 247, 259
ANEY, Dr Madhao Shrihari, Member for Indians Overseas, Viceroy's Executive Council 1941–3; appointed representative in Ceylon of Government of India July 1943 30, 110, 402, 510
ANTHONY *see* EDEN
APPLETON, Colonel J. A., U.S. Army; formerly General Manager of New York zone of Pennsylvania Railroad; visited India 1944 with Mr R. J. M. Inglis 438
ARMSTRONG, Edmond Arrenton, an Assistant Secretary (Civil) in the War Cabinet Offices since 1941; Deputy to Sir A. Rowlands (q.v.) as Adviser to Viceroy on War Administration 498
ASSHETON, Ralph (later 1st Baron Clitheroe), M.P. (Nat. Unionist) for Nottingham, Rushcliffe; Financial Secretary to the Treasury 1943–4 139
ATTLEE, Clement Richard, M.P. (Lab.) for Stepney, Limehouse; Deputy Prime Minister since 1942; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs 1942–3; Lord President of the Council since 28 Sept. 1943. At War Cabinet 2, 61, 71, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 653; on India Committee 120, 152, 159–60, 641; and preparations for Dominion P.Ms' Conference 137, 342; and Casey's appointment as Bengal Governor 280; and Finance Membership of Council 286, 303; and Wavell's reply to Gandhi's letter of 27 July 1944 644, 647, 651–2, 662–3, 667; and food shipments 672; *also* 108, 157, 336–7, 621, 645
AUCHINLECK, Gen. Sir Claude John Eyre, C.-in-C., Middle-East 1941–2; C.-in-C., India since 20 June 1943. Appointment as C.-in-C., India and relation of his command to S.E.A.C. 2–3, 7, 11, 13, 14 n., 17–18, 28, 30, 35, 53, 72, 87, 103; and food situation 39, 66, 78–9, 87, 98, 100, 102, 119, 123, 132, 137, 142, 144, 157, 230, 233, 382, 384, 386, 393, 397, 401–2, 408, 413–14, 419, 432, 434, 436, 438, 440, 448, 480, 530–1, 541; and preparations for disturbances on anniversary of Congress leaders' detention 45; and Indians in S. Africa 82, 87; and return of Indian formations in Middle East and Italy 107, 438; and use of army in Bengal 193, 199, 213, 301, 344; and Famine Enquiry 215; and coal situation 238, 504; and planning for services 253; and possibility of Section 93 in Bengal 315; and fresh officers for army 325, 352; and statement on Burma operations 438, 447; and post-war Commonwealth defence 442; and release of Gandhi 495, 504–5; and army morale 670; *also* 242, 454, 465, 468, 519, 521, 538, 626, 672
AURANGZEB KHAN, Sardar Muhammad, Chief Minister of North-West Frontier

AURANGZEB KHAN (*cont.*):
Province since May 1943 112, 366, 549
AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN INDIA *see* MACKAY
AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER IN LONDON *see* BRUCE
AYKROYD, Dr Wallace Ruddell, Director, Nutrition Research Laboratories, Coonoor, S. India since 1935; member of Bengal Famine Enquiry Commission 1944 187, 412, 535
AYYANGAR (AIYENGAR, IYENGAR), Sir Gopalaswami, Diwan of Jammu and Kashmir 1937–43; Member of Council of State 139
AYYAR, Nilakanta Mahadeva, I.C.S., Director of Civil Supplies, Govt of Bengal from April 1943 75–6, 158
AZAD, Maulana Abul Kalam, President, Indian National Congress 1923 and since 1939 110, 492, 615, 632, 659
AZIZUL HAQUE (HUQUE) *see* HAQUE

BADRUDDUJA, Syed, Mayor of Calcutta 1943 216–17, 221
BAIG, Mirza Rashid Ali, businessman; Sheriff of Bombay 1942; chief organiser, National War Front from June 1944 607, 617
BAJPAI, Sir Girja S., I.C.S., Agent to the Governor-General in U.S.A. since 1941 9, 101, 116, 128, 245, 248, 430, 447, 535, 601, 611, 617–18, 661, 664, 672; proposal to elevate status of *see Chapter 8 in Summary of Documents*
BAKER, Ernest Brian Hindley, I.C.S. Additional Secretary to the Governor of Bengal since 1940 199 enc.
BAKHSH, Allah *see* ALLAHBAKHSH
BAKHSH, Pir Ellahi *see* BUX
BALDEV SINGH, Sardar, Minister of Development, Punjab from 1942 73, 118, 129, 250, 452, 460, 574, 619
BARKAT ALI, Malik, Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly 503
BARLOW, Brigadier Alfred Edmund, I.A., Sub-Area Commander, Midnapore, Bengal 199 enc. 4
BARTON, Sir William Pell, Indian Political Service retd. 1930; visited India with Ministry of Supply Mission 1940–1 36
BATTENBERG, Prince Alexander of (1857–93), occupied throne of Bulgaria 1879–86; uncle of Lord Louis Mountbatten (q.v.) 183
BAXTER, George Herbert, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, India Office, from July 1943 413, 433, 453, 618
BEATTY, Alfred Chester, businessman with numerous mining interests particularly in Africa 117, 137, 146
BEAVERBROOK, Baron (William Maxwell Aitken), Minister of Supply 1941–Feb. 1942; Minister of War Production 4–19 Feb. 1942; Lord Privy Seal from Sept. 1943 168, 171, 219, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 532, 575
BELL, Frank Owen, I.C.S., Magistrate and Collector, Midnapore, since Oct. 1936 199 enc.
BELLENGER, Capt. Frederick John, M.P. (Lab.) for Nottingham, Bassetlaw 670
BENTHALL, Sir Edward Charles, Senior Partner of Bird and Co., Calcutta; Member for War Transport, Viceroy's Executive Council since July 1942 82, 215, 238, 278, 381, 414, 430, 438, 451, 454, 468, 504, 600, 607
BERESFORD, Maj.-Gen. George de la Poer, I.A. retd; re-employed 1942 199 enc. 4
BERLE, Adolf Augustus, jun., Assistant Secretary of State, U.S. Govt since 1938 610 n.
BEVIN, Ernest, M.P. (Lab.) for Wandsworth Central; Minister of Labour and National Service since 1940. At War Cabinet 2, 61, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623; and Indian social and economic policy 48, 52–3, 60, 72, 87, 113, 157, 186, 198, 239–40, 336–7, 618
BHATNAGAR, Sir Shanti Swarupa, Director of Scientific and Industrial Research, Govt of India since 1940 36, 324

BHOPAL, Nawab of, Member, National Defence Council; Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes from March 1944 110, 111, 183, 296, 318, 361, 368, 398, 401, 406, 431, 447, 521, 585, 607, 612, 617, 660

BHORE, Sir Joseph William, I.C.S. retd, Chairman, Health Survey and Development Committee from Oct. 1943 336, 521, 617, 660

BIKANER, Maharaja of (1880–1943), Pro-Chancellor, Chamber of Princes; died 2 Feb. 1943 111

BIKANER, Maharaja of, succeeded his father who died 1943 676

BINNEY, Anthony Lockhart, I.C.S., an Adviser to the Governor of the Central Provinces since Jan. 1944 414

BIRKENHEAD, 1st Earl of (Frederick Edwin Smith; 1872–1930), Secretary of State for India 1924–8 Appendix

BIRLA, Ghanshyam Das, Managing Director of Birla Brothers Ltd; leading businessman and industrialist 75–6, 100, 158, 344, 404, 411, 439, 448, 451, 523, 535, 595

BISCOE, Walter Treweeke, Deputy Chief Commercial Manager, Indian State Railways since 1941 158

BISMARCK, Otto, Prince von (1815–98), First Chancellor of the German Empire 183

BISSELL, Brigadier-General Clayton, Commanding Officer, U.S. 10th Air Force 30

BLAIR, James Richard, I.C.S., Chief Secretary, Govt of Bengal, 1942–3 87, 158

BOKHARI, A. S., Controller of Broadcasting All-India Radio since April 1940 447

BOOTH, the Reverend William (1829–1912), General and Commander-in-Chief of the Salvation Army which he had founded 451

BOR, Norman Loftus, Indian Forest Service since 1921; administrator, Burma refugee organisation, Assam, since 1942 527

BOSE, Rash Behari, Interim President of Indian Independence League at Singapore succeeded by Subhas Chandra Bose 37

BOSE, Sarat Chandra, left-wing Congress leader of Bengal; leader of Forward Bloc movement; brother of Subhas Chandra Bose 6, 18, 50, 68, 70

BOSE, Subhas Chandra, I.C.S. 1919–21; resigned to join non-co-operation movement; founder and leader of Forward Bloc Movement; Member, Indian Legislative Assembly for Dacca; President, Indian National Congress 1938–April 1939 when he resigned; left India for Germany Jan. 1941; President, Indian Independence League at Singapore from 4 July 1943; brother of Sarat Chandra Bose 37, 68, 274

BOURDILLON, Sir Bernard Henry, I.C.S., transferred to Colonial Service 1929; Governor of Nigeria 1935; retd 1943 377

BRABOURNE, 5th Baron (Michael Herbert Rudolf Knatchbull; 1895–1939), Governor of Bombay 1933–6; of Bengal 1937–9; acting Viceroy June–Oct. 1938 91

BRACKEN, Brendan, M.P. (Con.) for Paddington, North; Minister of Information since 1941 2, 4, 11, 91, 137, 168, 358, 393, 434, 532, 575, 623, 629

BRADFIELD, Maj.-Gen. Sir Ernest William Charles, I.M.S. retd; Medical Adviser to the Secretary of State for India 617

BRAUND, Henry Benedict Linthwaite, formerly Judge, High Court, Allahabad; Regional Food Commissioner, Eastern Region, India, from 1943 27, 70, 199 enc., 200, 250, 333

BRIDGES, Sir Edward Ettingdene, Secretary to the Cabinet since 1938 10, 114, 120, 133, 152, 159, 170, 173, 409, 472, 492, 498, 514, 533, 536, 628, 641, 652

BRISTOW, Charles Holditch, I.C.S., an Adviser to Governor of Bombay since 1940 31

BROOKE, Gen. (Field Marshal from 1 Jan. 1944) Sir Alan Francis (later 1st Viscount

BROOKE (*cont.*):
Alanbrooke), Chief of the Imperial General Staff since 1941 2, 28, 98, 100, 102, 107, 119, 139, 393, 434, 518, 523, 672; *see also* CHIEFS OF STAFF
BROWNING, Lt-Gen. Sir Frederick Arthur Montague, Deputy Commander, First Allied Airborne Army, 1944 531
BRUCE, Stanley Melbourne, Prime Minister of Australia 1923–9; Australian High Commissioner in London since 1933 2, 137, 184, 358, 393, 434, 511, 518, 533, 676
BRYCE, 1st Viscount of Dechmont (James Bryce; 1838–1922), jurist, historian and statesman; British Ambassador to the United States 1907–13; author of (*inter al.*) *Modern Democracies*, 2 vols (Macmillan, 1921) 670
BRYDDIE *see* AMERY, Mrs
BURDER, J. H., President, Bengal Chamber of Commerce; member of Jardine Skinner and Co. 199
BURDWAN, Maharajadhiraja of 465
BURTON, Sir Geoffrey Pownall, I.C.S., an Adviser to Governor of the Central Provinces since Nov. 1939 414
BUTLER, Harold Beresford, Minister, British Embassy, Washington since 1942 9
BUTLER, Horace Somerset Edmond, Commercial Adviser to Govt of India, Food Dept 158
BUTLER, Richard Austen, M.P. (Con.) for Essex, Saffron Walden; President, Board of Education since 1941; Minister of Education from 1944 113, 328 n., 355, 358, 371–3, 376, 378, 380, 389, 391, 393, 410, 417 n., 430, 445, 447, 455, 641, 653
BUTLER, Sir Spencer Harcourt (1869–1938), I.C.S., Chairman, Indian States Committee 1928–9 350
BÜTOW, a young German with admiration for Hitler who had joined Gandhi for the first six months of 1934 and whom Gandhi had sought to wean from the cult of violence; he then returned to South Africa 247
BUX, Allah *see* ALLAHBAKHSH
BUX (BAKHSH) NAWAZALI, Pir Ellahi (Illahi), Minister for Excise etc., Sind 543
BYRON, 6th Baron (George Gordon Byron; 1788–1824), poet 508

C.I.G.S. *see* BROOKE
CADOGAN, Sir Alexander George Montagu, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since 1938 2, 171, 645
CALCUTTA, Mayor of *see* BADRUDDUJA
CAMPBELL, K., a Partner in Shaw Wallace and Co., Merchants and Agents, Calcutta 158
CAMPBELL, Sir Ronald Ian, Minister, British Embassy, Washington since 1941; Head of Mission during Lord Halifax's absences 602–3, 617
CANDY, Maj.-Gen. Ronald Herbert, Surgeon-General with the Govt of Bombay since July 1936 483, 495, 497, 501, 504, 510, 570
CANNING, Earl (Charles John Canning; 1812–62), Viceroy 1858–62 467
CANTERBURY, Archbishop of *see* TEMPLE
CAROE, Olaf Kirkpatrick, I.C.S., Secretary, External Affairs Dept, Govt of India since 1939 285, 333, 414 n, 504, 617, 674
CASEY, Mrs Ethel Marian (*née* Sumner), wife of R. G. Casey 287, 454, 478
CASEY, Richard Gardiner, Minister of State in the Middle East 18 March 1942–23 Dec. 1943; Governor of Bengal since 22 Jan. 1944. At War Cabinet 304; in capacity of Minister of State, Middle East 87; appointment as Governor, Bengal and timing of his arrival *see Chapter 5 in Summary of Documents*; and Ministerial difficulties and question of Section 93 277–80, 287, 290, 301, 306, 308, 310, 313, 320, 322–5, 328–9, 344, 352, 357, 414, 527, 535, 541, 550, 552, 555, 564–5, 568, 574–5, 578, 583, 593, 617, 639, 670; and Finance Membership of Council 305; meetings with Wavell 333–4, 344, 454, 457, 478, 617, 639, 660;

CASEY, Richard Gardiner (*cont.*):
and administrative help for Bengal 344, 352, 357, 370, 381, 414, 438, 447; and Bengal Press 345, 356, 381, 389; and food situation 414, 426, 430, 451, 457, 465–6, 510, 521, 538 enc., 552, 593; and resumption of recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P. 450; wish to discontinue fortnightly reports 458; and Bengal Administrative Enquiry 521, 545, 558, 562, 565, 568, 598, 660, 676; on constitutional situation 538 enc., 665; and Bengal water problems 635, 670; and Aug. 1944 Governors' Conference 670; *also* 365, 390
CAWTHORN, Maj.-Gen. Walter Joseph, Director of Military Intelligence (D.M.I.) India since 1941 333
CELLER, Emanuel, Member of U.S. House of Representatives since 1922 447
CHANCELLOR OF CHAMBER OF PRINCES *see* NAWANAGAR AND BHOPAL
CHANDLER, Albert Benjamin, U.S. Senator 1939–48 675–6
CHERWELL, 1st Baron (Frederick Alexander Lindemann). Professor of Experimental Philosophy, Oxford; physicist; personal assistant to Prime Minister 1940; Paymaster-General since 1942. At War Cabinet 61, 71, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 532, 575, 623, 629; on Foodgrain Requirements Committee 372, 413, 453; and Indian Finances 72, 85, 100, 137, 157, 205, 346, 594; and Indian food situation 371, 401, 410, 471, 474, 478
CHETTIAR, Sir Muthiah Annamalai, Kumararaja of Chettinad; Member, National Defence Council; leader of Opposition, Madras Legislative Assembly, 1937–9; Justice Party 574, 593
CHETTY, Sir Shanmukham, Head of the Govt of India Purchasing Mission in the United States 1941–2 430, 438, 447, 454, 465
CHETWODE, Field Marshal Sir Philip Walhouse, Commander-in-Chief of the Army in India 1930–5 559
CHHATARI, Capt. Sir Muhammad Ahmad Said Khan, Nawab of, President, Executive Council of the Nizam of Hyderabad since 1941 20, 343
CHHOTU RAM, Rao Bahadur Sir Chaudhri; Minister of Revenue, Punjab since 1937 13, 55, 86, 118, 129, 213, 230, 248, 250, 452, 459, 460, 465, 469, 517, 593
CHIANG KAI-SHEK, Generalissimo, President of the National Supreme War Council of China; Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Kuomintang 21 n., 30, 37, 242, 250, 259, 260, 278, 346, 352 n., 370–1
CHIANG KAI-SHEK, Madame, wife of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek, sister of T. V. Soong 30, 248, 250, 259–60, 278, 352 n, 370–1, 510.
CHIEF, THE *see* AUCHINLECK
CHIEF JUSTICE, BENGAL *see* DERBYSHIRE
CHIEF JUSTICE, BOMBAY *see* STONE
CHIEF JUSTICE, INDIA *see* SPENS
CHIEF SECRETARY, BENGAL *see* WILLIAMS, Arthur de Coetlogan
CHIEFS OF STAFF 98, 119, 132, 137, 139, 142, 157, 185, 335, 384, 386, 409, 413, 419, 431–2, 434–5, 451, 453, 458, 468, 480, 482, 484, 530, 537, 541–2, 550–1, 635, 664, 672, 676 *see also* BROOKE, Sir A.; CUNNINGHAM, Sir A.; PORTAL, Sir C.; and POUND, Sir A. D.
CHRISTIE, Walter Henry John, I.C.S., Deputy Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India since Feb. 1943 5, 95
CHURCHILL, Winston Leonard Spencer, M.P. (Con.) for Essex, Epping; Prime Minister and Minister of Defence since 1940. At War Cabinet 2, 61, 71, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 358, 378, 393, 434, 476, 575, 623, 629; and Wavell's and Auchinleck's appointments 1, 3, 7, 11, 13–18, 35; and S.E.A.C. structure 2–4, 11, 14 n., 18, 21, 28, 30, 35, 103, 213; and proposed reduction in size of Indian Army 17, 346; and Indian Finances 63, 72, 85, 103, 157, 205, 303, 578, 587, 591, 594, 596, 635; and Finance Membership of Council 68, 270, 286, 290, 303, 305, 307, 369, 371, 390; and Indian food situation 83, 85, 87, 98, 100, 157, 182, 226, 346, 363–5, 371–3, 375–6, 379, 383, 389, 401,

CHURCHILL (*cont.*):
409, 413–14, 419, 432, 441, 444, 448, 472, 482, 485–6, 489–90, 523, 530, 537, 547, 550–1, 561, 635, 668, 672; and Quebec Conference 91; and reconstruction of War Cabinet 137, 157, 209, 458; at Farewell Dinner for Wavell 164; circulates Cabinet directive to Wavell 172; and Bengal Governorship 183, 204, 209–12, 218, 224, 226, 229–30, 234, 236, 242, 258, 260, 263, 266; and Cairo Conference 248, 260; and Bajpai's status 248, 635, 670, 676; and issue of Draft Declaration 290; and Indian representation at War Cabinet 332, 514, 518, 536; and release of Gandhi 494, 497–8, 500–1, 567, 570, 664; circulates Casey's letter to him of 20 May 1944 538; and reported differences with Roosevelt over Indian policy 574, 595, 603, 617; and Indian constitutional situation 128 enc., 161 enc., 163–5, 494, 508, 515, 577, 587, 591, 594, 596; and Wavell's reply to Gandhi's letter of 27 July 1944 618, 624–6, 630, 635, 642, 644, 647, 652–3, 664, 674; and Indian social and economic policy 635, 670; *also* 19, 23, 186, 259, 334, 355, 462 enc., 519, 568, 572

CLARKSON, Senator Charles Francis, Minister of the Interior, Govt of the Union of South Africa, from 15 Aug. 1943 268

CLAUSON, Miles John, principal at the India Office; loaned to the Treasury, Nov. 1943–Nov. 1944 when working for Sir A. Rowlands (q.v.) in India 20, 510

CLOW, Sir Andrew Gourlay, I.C.S., Governor of Assam since May 1942 35, 68, 238, 274, 278, 490, 504, 527, 540, 670

COAL COMMISSIONER *see* YOUNG, Patrick

COATES, Eric Thomas, I.C.S., Financial Adviser (Military Finance) to Govt of India since 1939 281

COLLINGWOOD, Robin George, Joint author with J. L. Myres of Vol. I of the Oxford History of England, entitled *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* 439

COLVILLE, Lt-Col. Sir (David) John, M.P. (Unionist) for Midlothian and Peebles, Northern 1929–43; Governor of Bombay since 24 March 1943 13, 29–31, 42–3, 51, 53, 62, 70, 91, 238, 281, 414, 429, 450, 465, 478, 512, 515, 552, 588, 593, 607, 639, 666

COLVILLE, Lady Agnes Anne (*née* Bilsland), wife of Sir John Colville 62

COLVILLE, Lady (Helen) Cynthia, woman of the Bedchamber since 1923 to Queen Mary 523

CONRAN-SMITH, Eric, I.C.S., Secretary, Home Dept, Govt of India since 1939 13

COOPER, Sir (Henry) Guy, General Manager of Burmah–Shell Oil Company, Bombay, 1936–44 438

CORNWALLIS, Sir Kinahan, Ambassador in Baghdad since 1941 562

COTTER, Edward, Colonel, I.M.S., Public Health Commissioner with the Govt of India since 1939 213, 333, 451

COUPLAND, Reginald (K.C.M.G. June 1944), Beit Professor of the History of the British Empire, Oxford University since 1920; author of *A Report on the Constitutional Problem in India* (O.U.P. 1942–3) 53, 103, 110, 117, 183, 205, 213, 242, 439, 443, 462, 511, 537, 618, 670

COVE, William George, M.P. (Lab.) for Glamorgan, Aberavon 156

COVELL, General William Raab, Commanding Major-General, U.S. Army, Service of Supply, China–Burma–India since 1943 670

COWGILL, John Harry Christopher, I.P., Superintendent of Police at Midnapore since Feb. 1942 199 enc.

COYNE, Dr Frederick Philip, lent by Imperial Chemical Industries to Food Dept, Govt of India as Adviser on food-grain storage and pest control 672

CRAIK, Sir Henry Duffield, Bart, I.C.S. retd, Political Adviser to the Crown Representative Oct. 1941–May 1943 17, 49, 513

CRANBORNE, Viscount (Robert Arthur James Gascoyne-Cecil; later 5th Marquess of Salisbury), Leader of the House of Lords since 1942; Lord Privy Seal

CRANBORNE (*cont.*):
Nov. 1942–3; Secretary of State for Dominion Affairs from 28 Sept. 1943 61, 71, 133, 139, 157, 168, 171, 263, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 449, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629
CRIPPS, Sir Richard Stafford, M.P. (Lab.) for Bristol, East; Minister of Aircraft Production since 22 Nov. 1942. For Cripps Mission, Cripps negotiations Cripps offer etc. *see* CRIPPS MISSION *and* DRAFT DECLARATION *in Index of Subjects*; at War Cabinet 2, 71, 133, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 393, 434, 476, 575, 623, 653; on India Committee 152, 159–60, 641; and Indian social and economic policy 19, 48, 52–3, 60, 72, 101, 113, 157, 186, 239–40, 336–7; attitude to Indian constitutional progress 674
CROFT, 1st Baron (Henry Page Croft), Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for War since 1940 163, 168
CROSTHWAIT, Timothy Leland, I.C.S., Assistant Private Secretary to the Viceroy Feb. 1942–April 1944 22–4, 30
CUNNINGHAM, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Andrew Browne, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff from 1943 393, 434, 668; *see also* CHIEFS OF STAFF
CUNNINGHAM, Sir George, I.C.S., Governor of North-West Frontier Province since 1937 89, 96, 112, 238, 250, 290, 333, 366, 450, 517, 549, 574
CURTIN, John, Prime Minister of Australia since 1941 101, 206, 243, 263, 266, 523, 572
CURZON OF KEDLESTON, Marquess (George Nathaniel Curzon; 1859–1925), Viceroy 1899–1905 as Baron Curzon of Kedleston 15, 156
CUTCH (KUTCH), Maharao of (1861–1942), represented India at Imperial Conference and League of Nations 1921 111

DALAL, Sir Ardeshir Rustomji, I.C.S. retd, Managing Director, Tata Iron and Steel Company, Bombay; Member for Planning and Development, Viceroy's Executive Council from 1 Aug. 1944 404, 407, 454, 458, 465, 509–10, 515, 519, 523, 527, 537, 542, 607, 638, 670
DALE, Sir Henry Hallett, President of the Royal Society since 1940; Member, Scientific Advisory Committee to War Cabinet since 1940 (Chairman from 1942) 482
DALMIA, Seth Ram Krishna, Industrialist and financier 100
DALTON, Hugh, M.P. (Lab.) for Durham, Bishop Auckland; President of the Board of Trade since Feb. 1942 61, 72, 388, 448, 575, 623, 629
DANGE, Shripad Amrit, President, All-India Trades Union Council; visited Britain June 1944 537
DARLING, 1st Baron (Sir Charles John Darling; 1849–1936), Judge of the Kings Bench Division of the High Court of Justice 1897–1923 91
DARLING, Sir Malcolm Lyall, I.C.S. retd, Financial Commissioner, Punjab, 1936–9; Indian Editor, B.B.C. since 1940 191
DAS, Pandit Nilakantha, Member, Orissa Legislative Assembly 565
DAULTANA, Mian Mumtaz, General Secretary of the Punjab Muslim League; Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly 493
DAVIES, A. Tegla, Member of the Friends' Ambulance Unit in India 1943 199 enc. 1
DAVIES, Clement, M.P. (Lib.) for Montgomery 234
DAVIES, Robert William Home, I.C.S., Judicial Commissioner for the States of Western India since 1938 338, 405
DE MONTMORENCY, Sir Geoffrey Fitzhervey, I.C.S. retd, Governor of the Punjab 1928–33 326, 377
DEO, Acharya Narendra, Congress Socialist 404
DERBYSHIRE, Sir Harold, Chief Justice, High Court, Calcutta since 1934 18, 138 n., 158
DESAI, Bhulabhai Jivanji, Congress Party Leader and Leader of Opposition in

DESAI, Bhulabhai Jivanji (*cont.*): Indian Legislative Assembly; President, Bombay Provincial Congress Committee 447, 651, 660
DESAI, Mahadev Hiralal, Private Secretary to Mahatma Gandhi; died 15 Aug. 1942 593
DESHMUKH, Chintaman Dwarkanath (kt. Jan. 1944), Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India since 1941; Governor from Aug. 1943 260, 270, 552, 568, 635
DESHPANDE, P. Y., Congress Party, Central Provinces 599
DE VALERA, Eamon, Taoiseach (Prime Minister) and Minister for External Affairs, Govt of Eire since 1937 234
DIBDIN, Aubrey, Joint Head of Economic and Overseas Dept, India Office since June 1941 191, 413, 433, 453
DILL, Field Marshal Sir John Greer, Head of British Joint Staff Mission Washington since 1942 205
DIRECTOR OF MILITARY INTELLIGENCE, INDIA *see* CAWTHORN
DORMAN-SMITH, Sir Reginald Hugh, Governor of Burma since 1941 635
DOUGLAS, Air Chief Marshal Sir (William) Sholto, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Middle East Command 1943-4 21
DOW, Sir Hugh, I.C.S., Governor of Sind since 1941 6, 35, 53, 230, 238, 250, 267–8, 438, 450, 504, 543, 574, 627
D'SILVA, Leonard Gregory, Director of Public Instruction, Govt of Central Provinces and Berar 60
DUBOIS, Abbé Jean Antoine (*c.* 1770–1848), Tamil and Sanskrit scholar; in 1792 as Christian missionary left France for India where he spent over 30 years; author of *Hindu Manners Customs and Ceremonies* completed *c.* 1806 113
DUDLEY, 3rd Earl of (William Humble Eric Ward), M.P. (Con.) for Hornsey Borough 1921–4 and for Wednesbury 1931–2; Parliamentary Private Secretary to Under-Secretary of State for India (Lord Winterton) 1921–3 92, 226, 562, 580
EASTERN COMMAND, G.O.C.-in-C. *see* MAYNE, General A.G.O.M.
EASTERN FLEET, C.-in-C. *see* SOMERVILLE
EDEN, Robert Anthony (later 1st Earl of Avon), M.P. (Con.) for Warwick and Leamington, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs since 1940. At War Cabinet 2, 61, 71, 133, 168, 171, 219, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629, 653; and elevation of Bajpai's status 183, 245, 248, 475; and Casey's appointment as Bengal Governor 280; and the Chiang Kai-sheks' journey across India 346, 352, 371; and Drew Pearson affair 602–3, 610, 675; and India's status in future world organisation 621, 645; and Wavell's reply to Gandhi's letter of 27 July 1944 633, 656; *also* 458
EDUCATIONAL ADVISER TO VICEROY *see* SARGENT
EDWARDS, Lt-Col. Cosmo Grant Niven, I.A., Indian Political Service; Resident, Kolhapur since Oct. 1942 62 para. 8
EISENHOWER, General Dwight D., Commander-in-Chief, Allied Forces in North Africa Nov. 1942–4; Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Western Europe from 1944 103, 531
ELDERTON, Sir Thomas Howard, Chairman, Calcutta Port Commissioners; Special Commissioner for Eastern India and Chairman of Railway Regional Priorities Committee 27
ELIOTT-LOCKHART, Allan Robert, businessman in Calcutta; Dept of Supply, Govt of India since 1940 199
ELKINS, Anthony Joseph, with Gillanders Arbuthnot and Co., Calcutta since 1924; controller of supplies, Bengal Circle, since 1941 199
ELLIOT, Ian F. L., Head of the Ministry of Supply Mission to India and the Eastern Group Countries, and Chairman of the Eastern Group Supply Council Feb. 1943–April 1944 156
ELMHIRST, Leonard Knight, Director, Institute of Rural Reconstruction, Bengal

ELMHIRST (*cont.*):
1921–4; purchased Dartington Hall for experiment in Rural Industry, Research and Education 1925; Head of Joint British-American agricultural mission to Mid. East 1942; Agricultural Adviser, Govt of Bengal from 1944 325, 352, 370, 447
EMENY, Stuart, War Correspondent of the *News Chronicle* stationed in India 1942–March 1944 (for later correspondent of *News Chronicle* *see* GELDER) 333
EMERSON, Sir Herbert William, I.C.S. retd, Governor of the Punjab 1933–8 49
EVATT, Herbert Vere, Australian Minister of External Affairs since 1941; Australian Member of Pacific War Council Washington and representative at British War Cabinet 1942–3 2, 184
EVILL, Air Chief Marshal Sir Douglas Claude Strathern, Vice-Chief of the Air Staff from 1943 668

F.O.C.R.I.N. *see* GODFREY
FAIZAL IBN HUSAIN (1885–1933), played leading part in Arab revolt during world war 1914–18 under General Allenby; undertook administration of newly constituted Syrian State 1918–20; elected King of Iraq 1921 164
FAZLUL HUQ, A. K., Chief Minister, Bengal, 1937–March 1943 6, 18, 26, 76, 82, 100, 109, 138, 151, 157–8, 175, 183, 213, 301, 320, 541, 552, 565, 574
FEIZAL *see* FAIZAL
FIROZ KHAN *see* NOON
FISCHER, Louis, journalist and author 574
FITZE, Sir Kenneth Samuel, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Secretary to Crown Representative 1940–4; an Adviser to Secretary of State for India from 26 June 1944 20, 230, 343 n., 676
FLOUD, Sir Francis Lewis Castle, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour, 1930–4; British High Commissioner in Canada 1934–8; Chairman, Bengal Land Revenue Commission 1938–40 562, 580
FOOD COMMISSIONER, EASTERN REGION, INDIA *see* BRAUND
FOOD SECRETARY *see* HUTCHINGS
FORSYTH, D. D., Secretary to the Prime Minister and Secretary for External Affairs, Govt of the Union of South Africa 465
FRANCE, Robert Edward, Principal in the Economic and Overseas Dept, India Office from Jan. 1944 433 n.
FRANKLAND, Edward P. Author of *The Bear of Britain* (Macdonald and Co., 1944) 639
FRASER, Lt-Col. Denholme de Montalte Stuart, I.A. retd, Resident in Mysore since 1941 87
FRASER, Peter, Prime Minister of New Zealand since 1940 243
FRENCH, Commodore Godfrey Alexander, R.N., Director of Training to the R.I.N. from 25 July 1943 325
FRENCH, Sir Henry Leon, Secretary, Ministry of Food since 1939; made official visit to India Aug.–Sept. 1944 535, 607, 617, 660, 670, 674
FRENCH, Sir John *see* YPRES
FREYBERG, Lt-Gen. Sir Bernard Cyril, G.O.C. New Zealand Forces since 1939, 192, 205, 230

GANDHI, Mrs Indira, daughter of Jawaharlal Nehru, wife of Feroze Gandhi 8, 670
GANDHI, Kasturbai (Kasturba), wife of Mahatma Gandhi 349, 394, 400, 402, 429–30, 463, 481 enc., 482, 492, 535, 599
GANDHI, Mohandas Karamchand, known as the Mahatma ('Great Soul').
Birla on 411
Agatha Harrison's letter of 2 Dec. 1943 to 247 enc.
and Edward Thompson 91
and big business 404
and Communist Party of India 127
His correspondence with Linlithgow

GANDHI, Mohandas Karamchand (*cont.*):
and Home Dept on Congress responsibility for 1942 disturbances 51, 62, 68, 145, 167, 188, 199, 232
his correspondence with Govt of Bombay on his detention notice 340
and his correspondence with Wavell 387, 400, 417, 438, 445, 455, 465, 539, 541, 544, 550, 559, 584, 597, 614, 659. *See also below for discussion on Wavell's reply to No. 614*
his correspondence with Home Dept on Assembly debate of restriction order made against Mrs Naidu 403, 425
His letter of May 1943 to Jinnah (Vol. III, No. 692) 18, 21, 51; and P.Q. on alleged non-publication of his letter of 21 Sept. 1942 to G. of I. (Vol. II, No. 779) 25; and proposal to move him to Ahmednagar, or re-detain him there if necessary 29–31, 429, 463, 473, 478–9, 487, 490–2, 494, 501–2, 529, 534, 557, 563, 575, 578, 592; and policy in event of further fast 29–31, 42–3, 46, 68, 70, 85, 103, 129, 463; control of publicity on further fast *see under* CENSORSHIP *in Index of Subjects*; mentioned in a general constitutional context 34, 60 enc., 94 enc., 110, 116 enc., 120, 135 enc., 152, 155–6, 160, 163, 165, 170, 291, 310, 447, 462 and enc., 507 enc., 519, 538; and possibility of disturbances on anniversary of his arrest 45, 72; and his request G. of I. should deny having received letter from him withdrawing 'Quit India' resolution 51, 54, 58, 62, 68; and his attitude to Cripps Mission 333, 428; and Wickenden's investigations 392, 462 enc.; and death of Mrs Gandhi 400–1, 417, 430, 445, 455, 481 enc., 482; and requests for interviews with him in detention 401, 418; worsening of his medical condition and decision to release him 483, 487, 491–2, 494–502, 504–5, 510, 567, 570; his activities after release 504, 510, 512, 515, 521, 523, 527, 535, 541, 552, 565, 570, 635, 639, 641; reactions to his release 506, 508, 510–12; and publication of *Correspondence with Mr Gandhi, Aug. 1942-April 1944* 535, 541, 544, 552, 570, 574; and allegation G. of I. withheld 1942 letter from Roosevelt to him 574; and his and Rajagopalachari's July 1944 proposals including discussion on reply to his letter (No. 614) of 27 July 1944 to Wavell 573–4, 576, 577–9, 581–2, 586, 588, 590–1, 593–6, 599–600, 604–5, 607–9, 613–20, 622–33, 635–7, 639–44, 646–53, 655–6, 658–60, 662, 664, 671; reactions to Wavell's reply (No. 659) of 15 Aug. 1944 to him 670, 673–4, 676; and his projected meeting with Jinnah 613, 615, 617, 622, 625–7, 636, 639–40, 646, 651, 653, 660, 664, 666, 670–1, 673–4, 676; *also* 23, 89, 226, 259, 344, 351, 381
GARBETT, Sir Colin Campbell, I.C.S. retd, Regional Food Commissioner, Northern India from 1 Sept. 1943 158
GELDER, Stuart, Correspondent in India of the *News Chronicle* July 1944 574, 576–7, 584, 588, 590, 593, 597, 607
GEORGE V (1865–1936), H.M. King-Emperor 1910–36 467
GEORGE VI, H.M. King-Emperor since 1936 80, 163, 173, 217, 258, 263, 395, 482, 509, 603
GHOSH, Sir Jnan Chandra, Director, Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore since 1939; Member, Indian Scientific Mission to Britain and U.S.A. 1944–5 482
GHULAM *see* HIDAYATULLAH
GIBSON, John Percival, Head of Political Dept, India Office since July 1941 230, 245, 604 n.
GIFFARD, General Sir George James, C.-in-C., 11th Army Group in S.E. Asia 1943–4 617
GILDER, Dr Manchersha Dhanjibhai Dhorabji, Gandhi's heart specialist since 1932; Minister for Health and Excise, Bombay, 1937–9 429
GILLAN, Sir Angus, Controller, Commonwealth and Empire Div., British Council since 1941 325, 448.
GIMSON, Christopher, I.C.S., Political Agent, Manipur since 1933 527

GLADDING, Donald, I.C.S. retd, Finance Secretary, Govt of Bengal 1933–9; Agent, Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation since 1940 158
GLANCY, Sir Bertrand James, I.C.S., Governor of the Punjab since 1941. And Punjab food and economic situation 13, 86, 146–9, 156, 169, 213, 238, 250, 257, 267, 457; and Punjab political and Ministerial situation 49, 55, 70, 73, 86, 118, 147, 156, 250, 452, 460–1, 465, 469, 477–8, 482, 490, 503–4, 510, 516, 527, 535, 541, 593, 619, 671; and resumption of recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P. 450; *also* 30
GLANCY, Lady Grace (*née* Steele) wife of Sir Bertrand Glancy 381
GODFREY, Admiral John Henry, Flag Officer Commanding, Royal Indian Navy from 1943 213
GOONETILLEKE, Oliver Ernest (K.B.E. 1944), Civil Defence and Food Commissioner, Ceylon, since 1942 465
GOPALASWAMI, Ramaswami Ayyangar, I.C.S., Secretary to the National Defence Council since 1941 412 n, 565
GORDON, Sir (Archibald) Douglas, I.P. retd, Civil Security Adviser to G.O. C.-in-C., Eastern Command, and 14th Army, India 27
GORDON, Donald, Deputy Governor, Bank of Canada, 1935–41; Chairman, Canadian Wartime Prices and Trade Board since 1941 333, 334 n, 369, 390
GORT, Field Marshal 6th Viscount (John Standish Surtees Prendergast Vereker), C.-in-C. of British Field Force 1939–40; Governor of Malta 1942–4; High Commissioner and C.-in-C. Palestine and High Commissioner for Transjordan from 1944 672
GORWALA, Astad Dinshaw, I.C.S., Financial Secretary to Govt of Bombay since 1941 344
GOULD, Sir Basil John, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Political Officer, Sikkim since 1935 490, 504
GOVERNOR OF THE BANK OF ENGLAND *see* NORMAN
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA *see* GOWRIE
GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF NEW ZEALAND *see* NEWALL
GOVERNOR OF RESERVE BANK OF INDIA *see* DESHMUKH
GOWRIE, 1st Baron (later Earl of, Alexander Gore Arkwright Hore-Ruthven), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia since 1936 370
GOYDER, Cecil William, Chief Engineer, All-India Radio since 1936 447
GRANT, Ulysses Simpson (1822–1885), Lt-Gen. in command of Federal Forces largely responsible for bringing American Civil War to an end; 18th President of the United States 1869–77 4 n.
GREEN, William Richard Connor, a 1st Secretary in Foreign Service; seconded to Govt of India for special service at Kabul Oct. 1941 674
GREENE, 1st Baron (Wilfrid Arthur Greene), Master of the Rolls since 1937 305
GREENFIELD, Henry Challen (*kt.* June 1944), I.C.S., an Adviser to the Governor of the Central Provinces since Nov. 1939 414
GREGORY, F. G., Manager of Tea Estates in Assam 541
GREGORY, Sir Theodor Emanuel Gugenheim, Economic Adviser to Govt of India since 1938 52, 123, 129, 141, 166, 193, 203, 222, 233, 238, 250, 268, 292, 316, 339, 347 App. 2, 357, 364, 438, 447, 465, 510, 521, 672
GRENFELL, Mrs Arthur, wife of Lt-Col. Arthur Morton Grenfell; *née* Lady Victoria Grey, daughter of 4th Earl Grey 381
GRIFFITHS, Percival Joseph, I.C.S. retd, Publicity Adviser to Govt of India; Central Organiser, National War Front 1942–4; Member, Indian Legislative Assembly (Assam, European) 76, 419, 471, 474, 665
GRIGG, Sir (Percy) James, Finance Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1934–9;

GRIGG (*cont.*):
M.P. (Nat.) for Cardiff, East from 1942; Secretary of State for War since Feb. 1942 71–2, 85, 113, 120, 137, 139, 152, 157, 159–60, 168, 170–1, 304, 320, 336–7, 358, 388, 393, 434, 444, 453, 470, 472, 474, 476, 478, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629, 653

GURNER, Cyril Walter, I.C.S., Public Health Dept, Govt of Bengal since Feb. 1943 76

GWYER, Sir Maurice Linford, Chief Justice of India and President of the Federal Court 1937–April 1943 17–18, 35, 439, 523

HAIG, Sir Harry Graham, I.C.S. retd, Governor of the United Provinces 1934–9 377, 580

HAILEY, 1st Baron (William Malcolm Hailey), I.C.S. retd, Governor of the Punjab 1924–8; Governor of United Provinces 1928–34; Chairman of Governing Body of School of Oriental and African Studies since 1941 230, 326, 339, 353 n, 370, 377, 412, 494, 562, 580

HAILEY, Maj. Philip Cotes, I.A. retd, Indian Political Service 568, 593

HAKSAR, Col. Sir Kailas Narain, officiating as Prime Minister, Jammu and Kashmir July 1943–Feb. 1944 when Sir B. N. Rau became P.M. 368

HALIFAX, 3rd Viscount (1st Earl July 1944) (Edward Frederick Lindley Wood), Viceroy 1926–31 as Lord Irwin; British Ambassador, Washington since 1941 4 n, 9, 15, 120, 160, 168, 171, 183, 241, 245, 341, 348, 475, 532, 537, 561, 568, 575–6, 581, 623, 635, 675

HALLETT, Sir Maurice Garnier, I.C.S., Secretary, Govt of India, Home Dept, 1932–7; Governor of the United Provinces since 1939 13, 92, 230, 238, 244, 259, 333, 344, 418, 454, 465, 504, 510, 515, 552, 559, 595, 607, 660

HAMILTON, General Sir Ian Standish Monteith, served in South African War 1899–1901; commanded allied army at Gallipoli 1915 242

HANCE, Major-General James Bennett, Director General, Indian Medical Service from Oct. 1943 213, 238, 250, 333, 511, 617

HAQUE (HUQUE), Khan Bahadur Sir Muhammad Azizul, Member for Commerce, Viceroy's Executive Council from May 1943 12, 69–70, 97, 226, 305, 315, 333, 344, 370, 381, 414, 430, 438, 447, 450, 454, 469, 600, 607

HARDINGE OF PENSHURST, 1st Baron (Charles Hardinge), Viceroy 1910–16 15

HARRISON, Agatha, Secretary, India Conciliation Group formed in 1931 by members of the Society of Friends and others 226, 247, 508, 670

HARRISON, William Henry (1773–1841), won battle of Tippecanoe against Indians 1811; fought in war of 1812–14 against British; 9th President of the United States March–April 1841 4 n

HARTLEY, Gen. Sir Alan Fleming, Deputy Commander-in-Chief, India, since March 1942 325, 417

HARTLEY, Arthur Coulton, I.C.S., Director of Rationing, Bengal from 1 Sept. 1943 93, 199 enc.

HARTOG, Lady Mabel Hélène Hartog, author of *Living India* (1935) and *India in Outline* (C.U.P., 1944); wife of Sir Philip Joseph Hartog 670

HAYE, Mian Abdul, Minister of Education, Punjab since 1937 452, 493, 516

HENDY, Mrs Kythé, employed in the British Consulate, Boston, Mass. 1943 80

HENNESSY, Jossleyn, Information Officer to the Agent to the Governor-General in U.S.A. since Jan. 1942 80, 129, 672

HERBERT, Lt-Col. Sir John Arthur, Governor of Bengal since 1939; resigned 18 Oct. 1943; died 11 Dec. 1943 5, 18, 26–7, 30, 33, 46, 56, 70, 75, 82, 87, 90, 109, 129, 146, 183, 199, 250, 267, 278, 580

HERBERT, Lady Mary, daughter of 6th Earl of Ilchester; wife of Lt-Col. Sir John Herbert 70, 92, 129, 199, 267, 310
HIDAYATULLAH, Khan Bahadur Sir Ghulam Hussain, Premier of Sind since October 1942 35, 543, 574, 627, 630
HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR INDIA IN BRITAIN *see* RUNGANADHAN
HILL, Professor Archibald Vivian, Secretary of the Royal Society since 1935; M.P. (Ind. Con.) for Cambridge University since 1940; Member of various Government Scientific Advisory bodies; Scientific Adviser to Govt of India and visited India Nov. 1943–April 1944 198, 298, 324–5, 352, 370, 438, 447–8, 451, 454, 458, 482, 509, 511, 521, 617, 674
HITLER, Adolf, Head of State, Leader and Chancellor of Germany 603, 672
HODGSON, Ralph, poet; winner of Polignac Prize 439
HOLBURN, James, New Delhi correspondent of *The Times* since 1942 510, 515, 521, 523, 565
HOPE, Capt. the Hon. Sir Arthur Oswald James (later 2nd Baron Rankeillour), Governor of Madras since 1940 44, 87, 238, 259, 268, 401, 431, 650, 673, 676
HORE-BELISHA, Leslie, M.P. (Lib. Nat. 1923–42; Ind. since 1942) for Plymouth, Devonport; Secretary of State for War 1937–40; member of War Cabinet 1939–40 103
HORNE, 1st Baron, General (Henry Sinclair Horne; 1861–1929), assault on Vimy Ridge 1917; baron 1919 15
HUBBACK, Sir John Austen, I.C.S. retd, Governor of Orissa 1936–41; an Adviser to the Secretary of State for India since 1942 339
HUDSON, Robert Spear, M.P. (Unionist) for Southport; Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries since 1940 388, 523
HULL, Cordell, Secretary of State of the United States since 1933 602, 617, 675
HUQ, FAZLUL *see* FAZLUL HUQ
HUQUE, AZIZUL *see* HAQUE
HUSAIN, Khan Bahadur Mian Afzal, Indian Agricultural Service retd; sometime Principal of Punjab Agricultural College, Lyallpur, and later Vice-Chancellor of Punjab University 412 n.
HUSSAIN (HUSAIN), Altaf, Muslim correspondent of the *Statesman* of Calcutta over the pseudonym of 'Shahed' or 'Shaheed'[1] 595
HUSSAIN, Major Nawab Ashiq, Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly; Minister of War Planning, Punjab, from 13 May 1944 510, 516
HUSSAIN, Sir Ghulam *see* HIDAYATULLAH
HUTCHINGS, Robert Howell, I.C.S., Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India from Sept. 1943 129, 199 enc., 213–14, 233, 267, 305, 323, 329, 344, 357, 370, 381, 401, 414, 438
HUTTON, Lt-Gen. Sir Thomas J., Secretary, War Resources and Reconstruction Committees of Council since July 1942 233, 438, 509, 527, 537, 607
HYDARI, Sir Muhammad Saleh Akbar, I.C.S., Secretary, Industries and Civil Supplies Dept, Govt of India since April 1943 156, 233, 414, 447
HYDERABAD AND BERAR, His Exalted Highness the Nizam of 511

IBBOTSON, Sir Archie William, I.C.S., an Acting Adviser to the Governor of the United Provinces since Sept. 1943 344
IDDON, Colwell, Principal, India Office 68
IENGAR, Haravu Venkatanarasingha Verada Raj, I.C.S., Secretary to Govt of Bombay, Home Dept from Sept. 1943 429, 510
INAYATULLAH KHAN (also known as Allama Mashriqi), formerly of Indian Educational Service; leader of the Khaksars 515
INDORE, Maharaja Holkar of 248

[1] The editors are indebted for this information to Mr Ian Stephens.

INGLIS, Robert J. M., a divisional manager of London and North Eastern Railway; lent to advise Indian Railways on locomotive requirements and traffic problems 1944; *see also* APPLETON 348 451, 465

INSPECTOR GENERAL OF POLICE, BOMBAY *see* SMITH, N. P. A.

IRWIN, Joseph Boyd, I.C.S., Secretary to Governor of Bombay 1938–Sept. 1943 31

ISMAIL, Sir Mirza M., Diwan of Mysore 1926–41; Diwan of Jaipur since 1942 439, 448, 454

ISPAHANI, Al-Haj Mirza Abol Hassan, Member of family business of M. M. Ispahani; Deputy Mayor Calcutta Corporation 1941–2; Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly; Member All-India Muslim League Working Committee 93, 158, 174, 199 enc.

JACKSON, Andrew (1767–1845), won battle of New Orleans (1815) in War of 1812 against British; 7th President of the United States of America 1829–37 4 n.

JACKSON, Sir (Francis) Stanley, Governor of Bengal 1927–32 70, 92

JACOB, Brigadier Edward Ian Claud, Military Assistant Secretary to the War Cabinet since 1939 229 n.

JAM SAHIB (SAHEB) *see* NAWANAGAR

JAMAL KHAN *see* LEGHARI

JAYAKAR, Dr Mukund Ramrao, Judge, Federal Court of India, 1937–9; Member, Judicial Committee of the Privy Council 1939–41; a leader of the Moderates 333, 370, 418, 430, 507 515, 527, 550

JEBB, Hubert Miles Gladwyn (later 1st Baron Gladwyn), Head of Reconstruction Dept at Foreign Office since 1942 645

JELLICOE, Admiral of the Fleet Earl (Sir John Rushworth Jellicoe; 1859–1935), Commander-in-Chief, Grand Fleet 1914–16; First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff 1916–17; Viscount 1917; Earl 1925 15

JENKINS, Evan Meredith (K.C.I.E. Jan. 1944), I.C.S., Secretary, Supply Dept, Govt of India, 1940–43; Private Secretary to the Viceroy from Oct. 1943 22–4, 30, 34–5, 53, 68, 108, 120, 128–9, 152, 159, 199 enc., 213, 226, 233, 243, 296, 310, 315, 324, 370, 459, 464, 521, 527, 535, 565, 577, 581, 585, 593, 601, 611

JINNAH, Mahomed Ali, President, All-India Muslim League 1916, 1920, and since 1934; leader of Muslim League Party in Indian Legislative Assembly; called Quaid-e-Azam (The Supreme Leader). And Gandhi's letter of May 1943 to him (Vol. III, No. 692) 18, 21, 51; and Punjab political situation 49, 55, 73, 118, 447, 452, 459 enc., 460–1, 465, 469, 477–8, 482, 490, 503–4, 516–17, 541, 619, 670–1; mentioned in a general constitutional context 53, 110, 116 enc., 120, 128 enc., 152, 291, 333, 437, 443, 456, 459 enc., 462 and enc., 464–5, 508, 515; assault on, by a Khaksar 62, 118; correspondence with Linlithgow on Kashmir situation 88, 99, 115, 136, 153; and likely reaction to Section 93 in Bengal 97, 301, 310; and N.-W.F.P. 112, 517; and Famine Enquiry 234; and Executive Council appointments 246, 537; and Federal Court 305, 344; Hallett's suggestion Wavell should ask him to see him 418; and Amery's idea that representatives of Provincial Ministries should meet to discuss constitution 494; and Sind 574, 607, 617; and Gandhi and Rajagopalachari July 1944 proposals including discussion on reply to Gandhi's letter of 27 July 1944 to Wavell 573–4, 576–8, 579 n., 581–2, 586, 590–1, 593–6, 607–8, 613, 615, 617, 619, 622–3, 626–7, 636, 640, 646, 651, 653, 660, 664; and his projected meeting with Gandhi 613, 615, 617, 622, 625–7, 636, 639–40, 646, 651, 653, 660, 664, 666, 670–1, 673–4, 676; *also* 213, 334

JOGENDRA SINGH, Sardar Sir, Member for Education Health and Lands,

JOGENDRA SINGH (*cont.*):
Viceroy's Executive Council since July 1942 68, 238, 298, 352, 370, 454, 521, 527, 552, 600, 607, 617, 660
JOHNSTON, Thomas, M.P. (Lab.) for Stirling and Clackmannan, Western; Secretary of State for Scotland since 1941 388
JOHNSTONE, Harcourt, M.P. (Lib.) for Middlesbrough, West; Secretary, Department of Overseas Trade since 1940 66, 71, 139, 219
JOLLY, Lt-Gen. Sir Gordon Gray, Director General, Indian Medical Service 1939–43 retd; Chief Commissioner, Indian Red Cross War Organisation since 1943 521
JONES, Cyril Edgar (K.C.I.E. June 1944), I.C.S., Secretary to Govt of India, Finance Dept, since 1939 268, 281, 325, 401, 509, 521, 670
JOSHI, Narayan Malhar, Nominated Member of Indian Legislative Assembly to represent Labour interests; General Secretary, All-India Trade Union Congress 1925–9 and since 1940 234
JOUBERT DE LA FERTÉ, Air Chief Marshal Sir Philip Bennet, retd and reemployed as Deputy Chief of Staff for Information and Civil Affairs, S.E.A.C. from 1943 468
JOWITT, Sir William Allen, M.P. (Lab.) for Ashton-under-Lyne; Minister without portfolio 1942–4 388
JOYCE, Alec Houghton, Adviser on publicity at the India Office since 1941 13, 25, 81, 87, 103, 126, 290, 325, 333, 401, 468, 660
JUDICIAL COMMISSIONER *see* DAVIES, Robert
JUNG, NAWAB BAHADUR YAR *see* YAR JUNG

KAK, Rai Bahadur Ram Chandra, Minister in Waiting, Govt of Kashmir 368
KALSIA, Ruler of 183
KANIA, Harilal Jekisondas, Puisne Judge, High Court, Bombay since 1933 593, 607
KARA, Miss Maniben, President, Bombay Presidency Committee of Indian Federation of Labour, and actively associated with Bombay Unions of Municipal Workers, Seamen, and Ship-repairers; visited Britain June 1944 542
KARNIK, V. B., President, All-India Coal Miners Union; Member, Govt of India Labour Advisory Committee; General Secretary, Radical Democratic Party; visited Britain June 1944 542
KARTAR SINGH, Gyani, Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly; a leader of Akali party; collaborator with Master Tara Singh (q.v.) 73, 607, 619
KASHMIR, Maharaja of, 136, 153, 296, 361, 368, 414, 421, 427, 430–1, 438, 442, 458, 476, 482, 485, 494, 510–11, 514, 518, 521, 523, 533, 536, 568, 593
KEMP, Sir Kenneth McIntyre, Legal Adviser to the Secretary of State for India and Burma since 1938 64, 70 n.
KENNEDY, William George, I.C.S., Officer in Charge of Lahore Corporation from Nov. 1943 477
KHAITAN, D. P., [?] General Manager of Birla Brothers Ltd; Member, Bengal Legislative Assembly; Member, Foodgrains Policy Committee 1943 199
KHALIQ-UZ-ZAMAN, Chaudhri, Member, United Provinces Legislative Assembly; Member, Working Committee, All-India Muslim League 459, 464
KHALLIKOTE, Raja Bahadur of, prominent landlord in Orissa; Member, Orissa Legislative Assembly; Member of National Defence Council 267
KHAN, Abdus Sobhan, Minister for Revenue, Health, Law and Commerce, Orissa since 1941 267
KHAN, M. A., Labour leader from the Punjab; Working President, United Union of North-Western Railway Workers; Vice-President, Indian Federation of Labour; visited Britain June 1944 542
KHAN, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad, Indian High Commissioner in South Africa 1941–4 129, 230, 238 and enc., 242, 278, 298,

KHAN, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad (*cont.*): 370, 438, 447, 451, 454, 465, 478, 482, 504, 510, 515, 527, 535
KHAN SAHIB, Dr, Chief Minister, North-West Frontier Province 1937–9; brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan 366
KHANNA *see* MEHR CHAND KHANNA
KHARE, Dr Narayan Bhaskar, Prime Minister, Central Provinces and Berar, 1937–8; Member, Viceroy's Executive Council for Indians Overseas since May 1943 29, 156, 278, 333, 370, 381, 414, 418, 430, 438, 447, 454, 457, 462, 465, 504, 510, 515, 521, 527, 535, 565, 574, 599, 600, 607
KHAREGAT, Sir Pherose Merwan, I.C.S., Vice-Chairman Imperial Council of Agricultural Research since 1939 510
KHER, Bal Gangadhar, Prime Minister Bombay 1937–9; Member, All-India Congress Committee 666
KHIZAR (KHIZR) HYAT KHAN TIWANA, Premier of Punjab since Dec. 1942 49, 55, 86, 118, 129, 146–9, 156, 230, 250, 267, 447, 452, 460–1, 465, 469, 477–8, 482, 493, 504, 510, 516–17, 521, 527–8, 535, 541, 574, 593, 619
KHUHRO, Khan Bahadur Muhammad Ayub Khan, Revenue Minister, Sind 35, 574
KING, William Lyon Mackenzie, Prime Minister of Canada since 1935 34, 101, 205, 209, 230, 234, 243, 390, 431, 494, 508, 510–11, 523, 535
KING-EMPEROR *see* GEORGE VI
KING-HALL, Commander Stephen, M.P. (Nat. Lab.) for Lancaster, Ormskirk; founded K-H Newsletter Service 1936 238
KIRBY, Wilfrid Howard, Assistant Secretary, Board of Trade, Fuel Rationing Branch 1942–3; loaned by British Govt as rationing adviser to Govt of India June 1943 75–6, 93, 125, 151, 158, 259, 344, 474, 482, 485, 504
KIRCHNER, Bernard Joseph, Managing Editor, Delhi Office of the *Statesman* 1932–41; Chief Press Adviser, Govt of India 1941–4 527
KISCH, Sir Cecil Hermann, Deputy Under-Secretary of State at the India Office from June 1943 32, 68, 137, 246
KITCHENER OF KHARTOUM, Field Marshal 1st Earl (Horatio Herbert Kitchener; 1850–1916), C.-in-C. India 1902–9; Agent and Consul-General in Egypt 1911–14; Secretary of State for War 1914–16 4, 290
KNIGHT, Henry Foley, I.C.S., an Adviser to Governor of Bombay since 1939 344, 515, 574
KNOLLYS, 2nd Viscount (Edward George William Tyrwhitt Knollys), Chairman, British Overseas Airways Corporation from 1943 371, 401
KRIPALANI, Acharya J. B., General Secretary, Indian National Congress 527
KRIPALANI, Mrs, wife of A. J. B. Kripalani 527, 537
KRISHNAMACHARI, Rao Bahadur Sir Vangal Thiruvenkatachari, Diwan of Baroda 1927–44 324, 537
KUNZRU, Pandit Hirday Nath, actively associated with Congress until the Liberals seceded in 1918; sometime President of All-India Liberal Federation; Member, United Provinces Legislative Council; Member, Council of State 344, 370
KURWAI, Ruler of 183

LAITHWAITE, Sir (John) Gilbert, Private Secretary to the Viceroy 1936–Oct. 1943; an Under-Secretary (Civil) in the War Cabinet Offices from 1944 8, 30, 34, 68, 81, 90, 156, 413, 433, 453, 641, 662
LAL, Gurusaran, Trade Adviser and purchasing agent to Govt of Bengal 158
LAL, Sir Manohar *see* MANOHAR LAL
LALBHAI, Kasturbhai, mill-owner of Ahmedabad; Director, Reserve Bank of India; Member, Scientific and Industrial Research Board 1940 404
LANE, [?] Maj.-Gen. Charles Reginald Cambridge, Commander 303 L. of C. area, India Command 56

LARI, Zahirul Hasnain, Deputy Leader, Muslim League Party, United Provinces Legislative Assembly; legal practice in High Court, Allahabad, since 1940 593
LARKIN, Alfred Sloane, I.C.S., Commissioner, Dacca Division 199 enc., 208
LAVAL, Pierre, Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of France 1931–2 and 1935–6; Président du Conseil (1940) and Head of Government (1942) of Vichy France 163
LAW, Richard (Dick) Kidston (later 1st Baron Coleraine), M.P. (Unionist) for Kingston - upon - Hull, South - West; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office since 1941; Minister of State, Foreign Office from 25 Sept. 1943 219, 304
LAWSON, John James, M.P. (Lab.) for Durham, Chester - le - Street; Deputy Regional Commissioner, Civil Defence Northern Region since 1939 209 n.
LAYTON, Admiral Sir Geoffrey, Commander-in-Chief, Ceylon since 1942 607
LEATHERS, 1st Baron (Frederick James Leathers), Minister of War Transport since 1941 71, 85, 98, 100, 103, 139, 142, 219, 226, 304–5, 309, 317, 319, 325, 335, 346, 358, 363, 371–2, 378, 391, 393, 397, 410, 413, 433–4, 439, 453, 458, 470, 476, 478, 485, 508, 521, 523, 530–1, 551, 561, 623, 635, 676
LEGHARI, Sir Muhammad Jamal Khan, Minister of Public Works, Punjab from 13 May 1944 510, 516
LENTAIGNE, Maj.-Gen. Walter David Alexander, in command of 3rd Indian Division 1944 490, 504
LEWIS, Sir (William) Hawthorne, I.C.S., Joint Secretary to British delegation, Indian Round Table Conference, London, 1930–1; Governor of Orissa since 1941 13, 35, 213, 230, 238, 244, 267, 437, 521, 541, 552, 565, 574, 607, 670
LIAQAT (LIAQUAT) ALI KHAN, Nawabzada, Hon. Secretary All-India Muslim League since 1936; Member, Indian Legislative Assembly for Rohilkund and Kumaon Division (Mohammadan Rural) 503, 510, 651, 660
LINDSELL, Lt-Gen. Sir Wilfrid Gordon, Principal Administrative Officer to the Indian Command since 1943 242
LINKLATER, Eric, author; Assistant Editor, the *Times of India*, Bombay, 1925–7; in Directorate of Public Relations, War Office since 1941 519
LINLITHGOW, 2nd Marquess of (Victor Alexander John Hope), Viceroy and Governor-General of India 1936–20 Oct. 1943. *See note at head of this Index.* 2–4, 6, 11, 110, 183, 186–7, 199, 209, 213, 230, 238–9, 242, 247, 251, 259–60, 271, 296, 313, 318, 325, 334, 338, 403, 431, 439, 447, 462, 467, 475, 513, 515, 519, 522, 532, 535, 537, 607, 609, 618, 635, 664
LLEWELLIN, Col. John Jestyn, M.P. (Unionist) for Middlesex, Uxbridge; Minister of Food from 12 Nov. 1943 358, 371–2, 378, 393, 410, 413, 419, 433–4, 447, 453, 476, 482, 485, 676
LLOYD GEORGE, Major Gwilym, M.P. (Nat. Lib) for Pembroke; Minister of Fuel and Power since 1942 388
LOCH, Maj.-Gen. Kenneth Morley, Master General of the Ordnance, India, from 1944 438
LOCKWOOD, Warren S., attached to U.S. Embassy London as Rubber Attaché 1943–4 working with Rubber Study Group of Britain, U.S., Netherlands East Indies, India and France 465
LORD MAYOR OF LONDON *see* NEWSON SMITH
LOTHIAN, Sir Arthur Cunningham, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Resident at Hyderabad since Oct. 1942 20, 343
LOW, David, cartoonist and caricaturist 247, 578, 607
LOW, Sir Francis, Editor, the *Times of India* since 1932 674
LUCE, Mrs Henry Robinson (Clare Boothe), playwright, columnist and author; Member, House of Representatives, U.S. Congress from 1943 447
LUMBY, Esmond Walter Rawson, a Principal in the Political Dept, India Office 467 n.

LUMLEY, Sir (Laurence) Roger (later 11th Earl of Scarbrough), Governor of Bombay 1937–March 1943 31, 370, 607
LYTTELTON, Oliver (later 1st Viscount Chandos), M.P. (Unionist) for Hants, Aldershot; Minister of Production and member of the War Cabinet since 1942 2, 61, 71–2, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629

MACDONALD, Gordon, M.P. (Lab.) for Ince Division of Lancashire 156
MACDONALD, James Ramsay (1866–1937), British socialist leader; Prime Minister 1924 and 1929–35 68 n., 437
MACDONALD, Malcolm, M.P. (Nat. Govt) for Ross and Cromarty; British High Commissioner in Canada since 1941 390, 449
MCGOWAN, 1st Baron (Harry Duncan McGowan), Chairman of Imperial Chemical Industries Ltd since 1930 36
MACK, John David, M.P. (Lab.) for Newcastle-under-Lyme 146 n.
MACKAY, Lt-Gen. Sir Iven Giffard, Australian High Commissioner in India from 1944 333, 431, 447, 451, 465, 593
MCKENZIE, the Reverend Dr John, Professor of Philosophy at, and Principal of, Wilson College, Bombay; Moderator, United Church of Northern India 53, 72
MACKENZIE KING *see* KING
MACMICHAEL, Sir Harold Alfred, High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief for Palestine 1938–44 580
MACMILLAN, Harold, M.P. (Unionist) for Stockton-on-Tees; Minister Resident at Allied H.Q. in North-West Africa since 1942 242
MAHARAJ SINGH, Kunwar Sir, Member, United Provinces Legislative Assembly; Prime Minister, Kashmir, 1943; President, National Liberal Federation 1943–4; representative of Christian Community in India 88, 370, 507
MAHATMA *see* GANDHI
MAHMUD, Dr Syed, General Secretary, All-India Congress Committee 1923 and 1930–6; Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress since 1940 463
MALAVIYA, Pandit Madan Mohan, President, Indian National Congress 1909, 1918, 1933; President Hindu Mahasabha 1923–4, 1936; Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University 1919–39, appointed Rector for life 1939 418, 430
MALAVIYA, Pandit Radha Kant, son of Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya 418, 430
MANAGING EDITOR OF *FREE PRESS JOURNAL* OF BOMBAY *see* SADANAND
MANNOOCH, Geoffrey Herbert, Inspector General of Police, Bengal, since April 1943 158
MANOHAR LAL, Sir, Finance Minister, Punjab since 1937 250, 452
MARLBOROUGH, 1st Duke of (John Churchill; 1650–1722), Commander-in-Chief, 1702–11, of the English and Dutch armies in the War of the Spanish Succession against Louis XIV 4
MARTIN, (Basil) Kingsley, Editor, the *New Statesman and Nation* since 1931 670
MARTIN, John Miller, Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister since 1941 10, 173, 266
MARTIN, Olaus Macleod, I.C.S., a Divisional Commissioner, Bengal since 1940; Relief Commissioner from 1943 125, 138, 151, 199 enc., 208, 213
MARY, Queen (Victoria Mary Augusta Louise Olga Pauline Claudine Agnes), wife of King George V 523, 535
MASHRIQI *see* INAYATULLAH KHAN
MASSEY, Vincent, Canadian High Commissioner in London since 1935 209
MASSIE, Grant, F.R.C.S., a Brigadier in Royal Army Medical Corps; consulting surgeon to India Command since 1942 199
MASTER, Nagindas Tribuvandas, Mayor of Bombay 512
MATHEWS, H. M., Electrical Commissioner to the Govt of India 454

MATTHAI, John, Director-General of Commercial Intelligence and Statistics 1935–40; Tata Sons Ltd. since 1940; Managing Director from 1944 438
MATTHEWS, Herbert, Correspondent in India of *New York Times* 404
MAXWELL, Sir Reginald Maitland, I.C.S., Home Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1938–4 April 1944; an Adviser to Secretary of State for India from 13 June 1944 13, 18, 28, 34–5, 51–2, 58, 68, 70, 72, 82, 87, 92, 183, 213, 230, 241, 249–50, 253, 260, 278, 298, 305, 315, 352, 370, 430, 438, 447, 450, 454, 490, 535
MAYNE, General Ashton Gerard Oswald Mosley, G.O.C.-in-C. Eastern Command, India 1943–4 199–200, 213, 230, 250, 259, 277–8
MAYNE, Major, Ronald Arthur Otway, G2, Intelligence, Eastern Command, responsible for Military Intelligence Reports on the food situation 370
MAYO, Katherine, author of *Mother India* (Jonathan Cape, 1927) 664
MAYOR OF CALCUTTA *see* BADRUDDUJA
MAZUMDAR, Sudhendra Nath, I.C.S., Secretary, Education Dept, Bihar from Feb. 1944 527, 537
MEDICAL ADVISER TO SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA *see* BRADFIELD
MEHR CHAND KHANNA, Rai Bahadur, Member, North West Frontier Province Legislative Assembly; Member, All-India Hindu Mahasabha; Secretary, Frontier Congress Parliamentary party 112
MEHTA, [?] Sir Chunilal Bhaichand, businessman; President, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry 1941–2 565, 574
MEHTA, Sir Homi, banker, merchant, millowner; Director, Reserve Bank of India; Chairman, Bombay War Gift Fund, Red Cross Fund, and President, Victory Thanksgiving Fund 281
MEHTA, Jamnadas M., Member, Indian Legislative Assembly for Bombay Central Division (non-Muhammadan); Member, National Defence Council; President, Indian Federation of Labour since 1941; President, Democratic Swaraj Party 1944 574
MENON, K. P. S. *see* SIVASANKARA MENON
MENON, Rao Bahadur Vapal Pangunni, Reforms Commissioner to Govt of India since Sept. 1942 68, 150, 154, 176, 178, 636, 660, 670
MENON, Vengalil Krishnan Krishna, Secretary, India League, London since 1927 87, 234, 537
MERRELL, George R., in charge of U.S. mission in India 30 n., 574, 617, 670
METROPOLITAN *see* WESTCOTT
MILNE, 1st Baron (George Francis Milne); assumed command of British Forces in Salonica, 1916; C.I.G.S. 1926–33; Field Marshal 1928; baron 1933 15
MINTO, 4th Earl of (Gilbert John Elliot-Murray - Kynynmound; 1845–1914), Viceroy 1905–10 546
MISRA, Pandit Godavaris, Minister for Home Affairs etc., Orissa 1941–June 1944 267, 346 n., 521, 535, 541, 564–5
MITRA, Sir Bhupendra Nath (1875–1937), Indian High Commissioner in London Nov.–Dec. 1924 and 1931–6 346 n.
MODY, Sir Hormasji Peroshaw (Homi), Member for Supply, Viceroy's Executive Council 1941–3 213, 510, 535, 565, 574
MOLESWORTH, Lt-Gen. George Noble; Deputy Chief of General Staff, India, 1941–2; Secretary, Military Dept, India Office 1943–4 413, 417
MONTAGUE, Frederick, M.P. (Lab.) for Islington, West 618
MONTEATH, Sir David Taylor, Permanent Under-Secretary of State for India since Jan. 1942 108, 120, 152, 159, 256, 260, 269, 280, 288, 369, 413, 433, 453, 458, 510, 514, 533, 536, 557
MONTGOMERY, General Sir Bernard Law; Commander-in-Chief British Group of Armies in Northern France 1944 594
MOOKERJEE (MOOKERJI, MUKERJI), Dr Shyama (Syama) Prasad; Finance Minister, Bengal Dec. 1941–Mar. 43; Working (Acting) President, Hindu

MOOKERJEE (*cont.*):
Mahasabha 6, 18, 26, 100, 109, 125, 301, 552, 565, 574, 577, 593, 640, 660
MOON, Edward Penderel, I.C.S. 1929–44 (resigned) 537, 552, 565
MOONJE (-JI), Dr B. S., ex-President, later General Secretary, All-India Hindu Mahasabha 57, 110
MOORE, Ralph Westwood, Head Master of Harrow School since 1942 439
MOORE, William Arthur, Editor of the *Statesman* (Calcutta) 1933–Aug. 1942 259, 346
MORGENTHAU, Henry, Secretary of the Treasury, U.S.A. since 1934 205
MORLEY, 1st Viscount (John Morley; 1838–1923), Secretary of State for India 1905–10 546
MORLEY, Alexander Francis, a Principal in the Information Dept of India Office 407 n.
MORRISON, Herbert Stanley, M.P. (Lab.) for Hackney, South; Home Secretary and Minister of Home Security since 1940 2, 61, 71, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 482, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629
MOSLEY, Sir Oswald Ernald, 6th Bart, Leader, British Union of Fascists; detained May 1940–Nov. 1943 468
MOUNTBATTEN, Acting Admiral Lord Louis Francis Albert Victor Nicholas, Chief of Combined Operations and member of C.O.S. Committee 1942–3. Appointed Supreme Allied Commander, S.E. Asia 1943 18, 103; arrived in India 129, 156; and Indian food and economic situation 230, 382, 384, 393, 397, 399, 401–2, 408–9, 413–14, 419, 430–2, 434, 436, 440, 444, 448, 453, 480, 484, 485 n., 486, 525, 530–1, 541; and the Chiang Kai-sheks 242, 250, 346, 370; and move of S.E.A.C. to Ceylon 310, 325; and Auchinleck's statement on Burma operations 438, 447; *also* 187, 468, 538 enc., 552, 626, 672
MOYNE, 1st Baron (Walter Edward Guinness), Deputy Minister of State in the Middle East since 1942 209 n.
MUAZZAMUDDIN HOSAIN, Khan Bahadur Saiyed, Agriculture Minister, Govt of Bengal from April 1943 158
MUDALIAR, Diwan Bahadur Sir A. Ramaswami, Member for Commerce, Viceroy's Executive Council 1939–42; a representative of India at the War Cabinet and Pacific War Council, London 1942–3; Member for Supply, Viceroy's Executive Council since Aug. 1943. At War Cabinet 2; and Wavell's and Auchinleck's appointments 11, 17; and constitutional questions 34, 70; and Indian representation at War Cabinet 35, 70, 362; and social and economic policy 36, 47, 53, 324, 401, 431, 438; and Indians in S. Africa 82, 87, 156; and food situation 144; and proposal to appoint him Finance Member in 1944 183, 213, 234, 244, 246, 250, 256, 260–1, 268, 270, 281–2, 289–90, 298, 304, 325, 334, 346; in capacity as Supply Member 199, 531; and coal situation 238, 593; and proposed British Council delegation to India 352, 370; and appropriate dept for contact with Australian High Commissioner 414, 430; suggested by Amery for Planning and Development portfolio 448; and resumption of recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P. 450; and publication of Gandhi's correspondence 535; and filling of Finance portfolio in 1945 552, 568; *also* 68, 371, 418
MUDIE, (Robert) Francis (K.C.I.E. June 1944), I.C.S., Chief Secretary, Govt of United Provinces since 1939; acting Governor of Bihar Sept. 1943–April 1944; Home Member, Viceroy's Executive Council from 23 July 1944 92, 238, 244, 298, 324, 333, 344, 381, 414, 428, 445, 447, 454–5, 457, 459, 463–4, 607, 670
MUKHERJEA, Tarak Nath, Revenue Minister including Relief, Govt of Bengal since April 1943 158
MUKHERJEE (-JI) *see* MOOKERJEE
MUNSHI, Kanhialal Maneklal, Home Minister, Bombay, 1937–9; resigned from Congress July 1941 53, 370

MUNSTER, 5th Earl of (Geoffrey William Richard Hugh FitzClarence), Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India and Burma since Jan. 1943 108, 401, 413, 433, 453, 594, 605, 607, 614
MURRAY, Keith Anderson Hope, Director of Food and Agriculture, Middle East Supply Centre, G.H.Q. Middle East 1942–5 267, 325, 352, 370, 447
MUSSOLINI, Benito, Head of Government and Prime Minister of Italy 1926–43 64, 70
MYRES, John Nowell Linton, Joint author with R. G. Collingwood of Vol. I of the Oxford History of England entitled *Roman Britain and the English Settlements* 439
MYSORE, Maharaja of 87, 91, 199

NABHA, Maharaja of 465
NAIDU, Mrs Sarojini Devi, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress; President of Congress 1925; poetess; interned with Gandhi 1942, and released unconditionally after his fast on health grounds 1943 351, 370, 387, 403, 462, 507, 510
NAIR (NAYYAR), Dr Sushila, sister of Pyarelal Nayyar (q.v.) 417, 463
NANAVATI, Sir Manilal B., Baroda State Service 1904–35; Deputy Governor, Reserve Bank of India 1936–41; President, Indian Society of Agricultural Economics since 1942 412 n., 607
NANJEE, Pranlal Devkaran, Vice-President, Indian Merchants Chamber, Bombay 512
NAPOLEON BONAPARTE (1769–1821), Emperor of the French 1804–14 and March–June 1815 599
NARAIN (NARAYAN), Jai Prakash (Jayaprakash), Congress Socialist 404, 462
NASH, Walter, Minister of Finance in New Zealand since 1935; Deputy Prime Minister since 1940; New Zealand Minister in the U.S. and Member of Pacific War Council, Washington since April 1942 434
NAUSHER ALI, Syed, Speaker, Bengal Legislative Assembly 527, 541
NAWANAGAR, Maharaja Jam Saheb of, Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes 1937 to Mar. 1944, thereafter Pro-Chancellor; Member, National Defence Council; a representative of India at the War Cabinet and Pacific War Council, London, 1942–Jan. 1943 251, 273, 278, 296, 318, 338, 361–2, 374, 395–6, 401, 405–7, 431, 494, 513
NAWAZ *see* SHAH NAWAZ
NAWAZ KHAN of KOT, Lt-Col. Sir Muhammad, Member, Punjab Legislative Assembly 477, 503
NAYYAR, Pyarelal, Secretary to Gandhi after death of Mahadev Desai Aug. 1942; brother of Dr Sushila Nair q.v. 463, 527
NAYYAR, Sushila *see* NAIR
NAZIMUDDIN, Kwaja Sir, Member, Working Committee, All-India Muslim League; Leader, Muslim League Parliamentary Party, Bengal; Chief Minister, Bengal since April 1943 6, 18, 30, 109, 151, 158, 306, 311, 313, 315, 324, 357, 462, 527, 535, 541, 550, 552, 555, 564–5, 568, 574, 593, 639
NEHRU, Pandit Jawaharlal, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress; President, Indian National Congress 1929–30, 1936 and 1937 29, 116, 135, 155, 403–4, 425, 670
NEPAL, Maharaja of, Prime Minister and Supreme Commander-in-Chief, Nepal, since 1932 82, 87
NEWALL, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Cyril Louis Norton, Governor-General of New Zealand since 1941 352
NEWSON SMITH, Sir Frank Edwin, Lord Mayor of London 1943–4 234
NICHOLS, Beverley, author and composer 664, 674
NIEMEYER, Sir Otto Ernest, Director, Bank of England; Director, Bank for International Settlements 268, 270, 281, 286, 288, 290, 305, 307
NOON, Malik Sir Firoz Khan, Indian High Commissioner to Britain 1936–41; Member for Labour, Viceroy's Executive

NOON (*cont.*):
Council 1941–2; Defence Member since 1942; a representative of India at War Cabinet April–July 1944 129, 250, 315, 332, 362, 421, 427, 430, 438, 442, 447, 458, 462, 476, 482, 485, 494, 497, 508, 510, 514–15, 518–19, 521, 523, 533, 535–8, 552, 578, 594, 600, 607, 618, 670
NORMAN, Montagu Collet, Governor of the Bank of England since 1920 234, 246, 256, 260, 268, 270, 281, 289, 346
NYE, Lt-Gen. Sir Archibald Edward, Vice-Chief of the Imperial General Staff since 1941 668

OGILVIE, Charles MacIvor Grant, I.C.S., Secretary to Defence Dept, Govt of India since April 1937 527

PANDIT, Srimati Vijaya Lakshmi (Mrs Ranjit S. Pandit), sister of Jawaharlal Nehru; Minister for Local Government and Health, United Provinces, 1937–9; President, All-India Women's Conference 1940–2 8, 234
PARANJPYE, Sir Raghunath Purushottam, Indian High Commissioner in Australia from 1944 515, 519, 521, 527, 535
PARLAKIMEDI, Maharaja of, Premier of Orissa 1941–29 June 1944; Member, National Defence Council 213, 267, 510, 521, 535, 541, 552, 564–5
PATEL, Sardar Vallabhbhai Jhaverbhai, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress; President of Congress 1931; Chairman, Congress Parliamentary sub-Committee 1935–9 404, 492
PATHER, P. R. sometime Secretary of Natal Indian Association; Joint Secretary Natal Indian Congress 248
PATIALA, Maharaja of, Pro-Chancellor of Chamber of Princes (after death of Maharaja of Bikaner in Feb. 1943 until Mar. 1944) 350, 634
PATNAIK MAHASAYO, Rai Bahadur Mandhata Gorachand, Member, Orissa Legislative Assembly 521
PATON, Maj.-Gen. William Calder, I.M.S., Surgeon General with the Govt of Bengal since May 1941 213
PATRICK, Paul Joseph, Assistant Under-Secretary of State, India Office, since July 1941 108, 110, 264, 324
PATWARDHAN, Achyut (Achut), invited to meeting of Working Committee, Indian National Congress 27 April–May 1942 404, 666
PAWSEY, Charles Ridley, I.C.S., Deputy Commissioner, Assam since 1935 527
PEARSON, Drew Andrew Russell, American columnist and radio commentator; daily newspaper column *The Washington Merry-Go-Round* since 1932 574, 602, 617, 661, 664, 670, 675
PECK, John Howard, Assistant Private Secretary to the Prime Minister since 1940 498 n.
PEIRSE, Air Chief Marshal Sir Richard, Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, India, 1942–3; Allied Air C.-in-C., S.E. Asia Command 1943–4 199, 213, 438
PETHICK-LAWRENCE, Frederick William (later 1st Baron), M.P. (Lab.) for Edinburgh, East; Member of Indian Round Table Conference 1931 468
PHALTAN, Ruler of 183
PHILLIPS, Sir Frederick, an Under-Secretary in the Treasury representing the Treasury in U.S.A. 1940–3 32
PHILLIPS, Sir Thomas Williams, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour since 1935 580
PHILLIPS, William, United States Foreign Service; President Roosevelt's Personal Representative in India Jan.–May 1943; Political Officer (U.S.) on General Eisenhower's staff, London, 1943–4 32, 80, 129, 574, 602–3, 617, 661, 664, 670, 675–6
PILDITCH, Denys, I.P., Director, Intelligence Bureau since 1939 57 n., 72
PILLAI, K. Shankar, cartoonist of the *Hindustan Times* 454, 676

PINNELL, Leonard George, I.C.S., Director of Civil Supplies, Govt of Bengal Aug. 1942–April 1943; Commissioner, Chittagong and Presidency Divisions since May 1943 76, 158, 310
PLUMER, Field Marshal 1st Viscount (Herbert Charles Onslow Plumer; 1857–1932), battle of Messines 1917; Baron 1919; Governor of Malta 1919–24; High Commissioner in Palestine 1925–8; Viscount 1929 15
POLITICAL ADVISER TO THE CROWN REPRESENTATIVE *see* WYLIE
PORTAL, 1st Baron (Wyndham Raymond Portal), Minister of Works and Planning since 1942 388
PORTAL, Marshal of the Royal Air Force, Sir Charles Frederick Algernon, Chief of the Air Staff since 1940 2, 119, 139, 393, 434; *see also* CHIEFS OF STAFF
POUND, Admiral of the Fleet Sir (Alfred) Dudley Pickman Rogers, First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff 1939–43 2
POWNALL, Lt-Gen. Henry Royds, Chief of Staff to Supreme Allied Commander, S.E. Asia Command 1943–4 552
PRASAD, Kunwar Sir Jagdish, I.C.S. retd, Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1935–40 595
PRASAD, Dr Rajendra, Member, Working Committee, Indian National Congress; President of Congress 1934 and 1939 226, 247
PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES *see* ROOSEVELT
PRO-CHANCELLOR OF CHAMBER OF PRINCES *see* BIKANER; *from Feb. 1943* PATIALA; *from March 1944* NAWANAGAR
PROFESSOR, THE *see* CHERWELL
PUCKLE, Sir Frederick Hale, I.C.S., Director-General of Information, Govt of India, 1939–43; Counsellor, British Embassy, Washington from 1944 195, 285, 407 n., 573, 576, 672
PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS, Sir, merchant; President, East Indian Cotton Association, Bombay; Director, Reserve Bank of India 123, 125, 344, 454, 521, 527, 535, 537, 565
PYARELAL *see* NAYYAR

QUAID-E-AZAM *see* JINNAH

RADHAKRISHNAN, Sir Sarvepalli; Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics, Oxford University since 1936; Vice-Chancellor, Benares Hindu University since 1939 430
RAHMAN, Sir Ahmed Fazlur, Vice-Chancellor, University of Dacca 1934–6; Member, Federal Public Service Commission, India, 1937 478
RAISMAN, Sir Abraham Jeremy, I.C.S., Finance Member, Viceroy's Executive Council since 1939. And Wavell's appointment 13; and filling of Finance portfolio in 1944 28, 68, 101, 157, 183, 213, 234, 244, 246, 250, 259–61, 268, 270, 281–2, 289, 298, 304–5, 307, 331, 334, 346, 360, 369, 371, 381, 390, 399, 401, 414; and inflation and sterling balances 30, 32, 70, 72, 87, 100, 107, 146–7, 156, 233, 238, 250, 268, 278, 298, 310, 399, 431, 438, 447, 465; and Indian States 30, 511; and social and economic development 52, 465; and S.E.A.C. 53, 107, 438; and food situation 78, 129, 147–8, 156, 238, 438, 447; and Indians in S. Africa 82; and Bengal situation 82, 87; and coal situation 238; and Indian services 253; and filling of Finance portfolio in 1945 552, 568, 593; *also* 35, 430, 478, 509
RAJAGOPALACHARI (-RIA, -RIAR and the abbreviation RAJAJI), Chakravarti, Prime Minister, Madras, 1937–9; resigned from Working Committee, Indian National Congress, April 1942 84, 91, 94, 156, 161, 168, 334, 370, 401, 404, 418, 459, 462, 494, 507, 573–4, 576, 582, 586, 588, 590, 593, 595–6, 599–600, 605, 607, 617, 640, 660, 671, 673

RAM, Sir Shri, landlord, banker and mill-owner; businessman of Delhi 404, 574
RAMAMURTY, Sonti Venkata, I.C.S., an Adviser to the Governor of Madras since 1942; Member of Bengal Famine Enquiry Commission 1944 412 n.
RAMAN, Sir (Chandrasekhara) Venkata, General President, Indian Science Congress 1928; President, Indian Academy of Sciences 1934 324
RAMAN, T. A., Indian Information Office at Washington 1943 80
RAMPUR, Nawab of 595
RAO, B. Shiva, Labour Leader; journalist, correspondent in Delhi of the *Hindu* and of the *Manchester Guardian* from 1935 87, 129, 574
RATIONING ADVISER TO GOVT OF INDIA *see* KIRBY
RAU, Sir (Benegal) Narsinga, I.C.S., Puisne Judge, High Court, Bengal 1938–44; Prime Minister of Kashmir from 9 Feb. 1944 in succession to Sir K. N. Haksar (q.v.) 385
RAWLINSON, General 1st Baron (Sir Henry Seymour Rawlinson; 1864–1925), battle of the Somme 1916; British Military representative on Supreme War Council 1918; Baron 1919; C.-in-C. India, 1920–5 15
RAZA ALI, Sir Syed, Indian Agent General in South Africa 1935–8 430
REDDI, Dr C. Ramalinga, nominated Member, Madras Legislative Council; Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University 334
REED, Sir Stanley, M.P. (Unionist) for Bucks., Aylesbury 618
REFORMS COMMISSIONER TO GOVT OF INDIA *see* MENON, V. P.
REGIONAL FOOD COMMISSIONER, EASTERN REGION, INDIA *see* BRAUND
REID, Sir Robert Neil, I.C.S. retd, Governor of Assam 1937–42; Acting Governor of Bengal June–Oct. 1938 and Feb.–June 1939 6, 26, 91
RELIEF COMMISSIONER, BENGAL *see* MARTIN, O. M.
RESERVE BANK OF INDIA, GOVERNOR OF *see* DESHMUKH
RESIDENT, DECCAN STATES *see* EDWARDS
RESIDENT, MYSORE STATE *see* FRASER, D. DE M. S.
RICHARDSON, Maj.-Gen. Roland, a Deputy Chief of the General Staff, India, since May 1943 199
ROBERTSON, Frederick Wynne, I.C.S. retd, Chairman, Federal Public Service Commission since 1942 253
ROBERTSON, Sir Malcolm Arnold, M.P. (Con.) for Surrey, Mitcham; Chairman of British Council since 1941 325, 334, 448
ROBINSON, William Heath, artist and cartoonist 538
ROGER, Sir Alexander, Chairman, Ministry of Supply Mission which visited India 1940–1 36
ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano, President of the United States of America since 1933 3–4, 9, 21, 52, 61, 72 n, 91, 248, 259, 389, 447, 476, 485–6, 489–90, 508, 515, 523–4, 527, 530–1, 551, 561, 574, 595, 602–3, 617, 675
ROWELL, Joseph, Report with N. W. Sirois (q.v.) on Dominion–Provincial Relationships in Canada 1940 670
ROWLAND, Francis George, I.C.S., Puisne Judge, High Court, Patna since 1936, retd Feb. 1944; on special duty, Home Dept, Govt of India from April 1944 490, 558, 562, 565, 580, 593, 597
ROWLANDS, Sir Archibald, Adviser to Govt of India on Military Finance 1937–9; Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Aircraft Production 1940–3; Adviser to the Viceroy on War Administration from Oct. 1943 199, 230, 271, 310, 324–5, 334, 346, 440, 444, 447–8, 451, 453, 458, 465, 468, 470, 478, 510, 523, 580, 660, 670, 676
ROY, Sir Asoka Kumar, Advocate-General, Bengal, 1934–43; Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council since 1 June 1943 18, 97, 100, 109, 510, 515, 600
ROY, Dr Bidhan Chandra, President,

ROY, Dr Bidhan Chandra (*cont.*):
All-India Medical Council since 1939; Vice-Chancellor, Calcutta University 1942–4; sometime Member of Congress Working Committee 490–2, 495, 497, 501, 504, 510, 521, 541, 570

ROY, Sir Bijoy Prasad Singh, Revenue Minister, Bengal 1938–41; President, Bengal Legislative Council; President, All-India Liberal Federation 1942 414, 430

ROY, M. N., Founder of Radical Democratic Party and Indian Federation of Labour 370, 381, 438, 462, 465, 507, 527, 537, 607, 670

ROY, Sir Satyendra Nath, I.C.S., Secretary, War Transport Dept, Govt of India since July 1942 298

RUMBOLD, Horace Algernon Fraser, Joint Head of Economic and Overseas Dept, India Office from July 1943 433

RUNDSTEDT, General Gerd von, German army commander 672

RUNGANADHAN, Diwan Bahadur Sir Samuel Ebenezer, Indian High Commissioner in London since 10 June 1943 187, 362, 618

RUSSELL, Col. Sir Alexander James Hutchison, I.M.S. retd, Public Health Commissioner with the Govt of India 1933–9; Additional Deputy Chief Medical Officer, Dept of Health for Scotland since 1940 521, 535

RUTHERFORD, Sir Thomas George, I.C.S., Governor of Bihar since Feb. 1943; Acting Governor of Bengal 6 Sept. 1943–21 Jan. 1944. In capacity of Governor of Bihar 13, 18, 68, 527, 574, 579, 608; appointment as Acting Governor of Bengal 91–2; and possibility of Section 93 in Bengal with related question of adequacy of Governor's existing powers over Ministry 104, 109, 124–5, 129, 131, 137–8, 140, 143, 146, 150–1, 154, 158, 176–9, 187, 233, 255, 277–8, 294, 298, 301–2, 308, 322, 325; and Bengal Famine and general situation 125, 129, 131–2, 137–8, 143, 146–7, 151, 158, 166, 180, 191, 199, 213, 234, 238, 255, 267, 283, 294, 298, 301–2; meeting with Linlithgow 156–7; and appointment of permanent Bengal Governor 183, 192, 199, 205, 229–30, 234, 238, 242, 250, 254, 277–8, 334; and Wavell's visists to Bengal 199, 278, 310; *also* 414

SA'ADULLA, Sir Muhammad, Prime Minister of Assam 1937–8, Oct. 1939–Dec. 41, and since Aug. 1942; prominent member of Muslim League 278, 459

SADANAND, S., Editor, *Free Press Journal* of Bombay (Independent Nationalist Daily in English) 217, 577, 593

SADULLAH KHAN, Khan Bahadur, Member, North-West Frontier Province Legislative Assembly 112

SAMUEL, 1st Viscount (Herbert Louis Samuel), Leader of the Liberal Parliamentary Party 1931–5 58

SAPRU, Pandit Prakash Narayan, eldest son of Sir T. B. Sapru; elected non-official member (since 1934) and Secretary, Progressive Party, Council of State; President, All-India Liberal Federation 1938–9 546

SAPRU, Sir Tej Bahadur, Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1920–3; President, All-India Liberal Federation 1923; a leader of the Moderates 94, 290, 333–4, 370, 418, 465, 481, 507, 520–1, 541, 546, 568, 571, 574, 579, 593, 595, 660

SARGENT, John Philip, Educational Commissioner to Govt of India since 1939, Educational Adviser since Jan. 1943 68, 113, 198, 238, 325, 336, 438, 448

SARKAR, Nalini Ranjan, Director of several industrial and financial concerns; Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1941–Feb. 1943 when he resigned 199, 213

SAROJINI DEVI *see* NAIDU

SASTRI, V. S. Srinivasa, a sometime Vice-President, All-India Liberal Federation; Vice-Chancellor, Annamalai University 1935–40 213, 334, 418, 430

SAVARKAR, Dr Vinayak Damodar, President, All-India Hindu Mahasabha 604

SCHUSTER, Sir George Ernest, M.P. (Lib. Nat.) for Walsall; Finance Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1928–34 209, 248, 618

SEBASTIAN, an Indian Christian working at a food kitchen, Mokrampur, Bengal, visited by Lord Wavell on 27 Oct. 1943 199 enc.

SEN, Samavendranath, I.C.S., Magistrate and Deputy Collector, Bengal; Subdivisional officer, Contai 199 enc.

SEN, Usha Nath, Director and Managing Editor, Associated Press of India 1937–44; Chief Press Adviser to Govt of India from 1944 527, 537, 660

SEYMOUR, Sir Horace James, British Ambassador in China since March 1942 346, 352, 371, 510

SHAFA'AT *see* KHAN, Sir Shafa'at Ahmad

SHAHABUDDIN, Khwaja, Commerce, Labour and Industries Minister, Govt of Bengal since April 1943; brother of Sir Nazimuddin (q.v.) 158, 465

SHAHEED *see* HUSSAIN, Altaf

SHAH NAWAZ, Begum, Parliamentary Secretary (Education and Public Health) Punjab 1937–43; Member, National Defence Council since 1941 504

SHANKAR *see* PILLAI

SHARMA, Ram Swarup, Congress supporter of many years' standing; Manager of the Peoples' Insurance Co. Lahore 404

SHATTOCK, John Swithun Harvey, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Secretary to Resident for Baroda since 1940 17 n.

SHAUKAT HYAT (HAYAT) KHAN, Capt. Sirdar, Minister of Public Works, Punjab, Feb. 1943 to April 1944; Member of Muslim League; a son of Sikander Hyat Khan (q.v.) 49, 55, 73, 86, 460, 469, 477–8, 482, 490, 493, 503–4, 510, 565

SHELDON, Gilbert, author of *The Transition from Roman Britain to Christian England* (Macmillan, 1932) 439

SHER SINGH, Gyani; a leader of the Sikhs; took part in Akali agitation of 1921–5 for Gurdwara reform 607

SHIELS, Sir Drummond, M.P. (Lab.) for East Edinburgh 1924–31; Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for India 1929 and for the Colonies 1929–31; Deputy Secretary, Empire Parliamentary Association 404

SHUKLA, Pandit Ravishankar, Prime Minister, Central Provinces 1938–9; founder of the *Nagpur Times* 506

SIKANDER HYAT KHAN, Sardar Sir (1892–1942), Premier of Punjab 1937–42 49, 55, 70, 73, 118, 447, 469, 503, 511, 516, 527

SIMCOX, Capt. R. T., Royal Army Medical Corps 417

SIMON, 1st Viscount (John Allsebrook Simon), Lord Chancellor since 1940 61, 152, 159–60, 168, 304–5, 320, 325, 336–7, 358, 378, 393, 623

SINCLAIR, Sir Archibald Henry Macdonald (later 1st Viscount Thurso), M.P. (Lib.) for Caithness and Sutherland; Secretary of State for Air since 1940; Leader of Liberal Parliamentary Party since 1935 46, 61, 70–1, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 568, 575, 623, 629, 653

SINGH, Sardar J. J., Member, Punjab Congress Committee 1920; Member, All-India Congress Committee 1921; President, India League of America since 1939 447

SINHA, Chandreshvar Prasad Narayan, Member, Bihar Legislative Assembly; National War Front Leader, Bihar 13 para. 21

SINHA OF RAIPUR, 1st Baron (1864–1928), Indian representative at Imperial War Conferences 1917–18; Governor of Bihar and Orissa Dec. 1920–Nov. 1921 when he resigned 205

SIROIS, Newton Wesley, Report with Joseph Rowell (q.v.) on Dominion–Provincial Relationships in Canada 1940 670

SIVASANKARA MENON, Kumar Padma, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Agent-General for India in China, Sept. 1943; again July 1944 101

SLADE, Admiral Sir Edmond John Warre (1859–1928), Commander in Chief, East Indies, 1909–12; father of Miss Slade 417
SLADE, Miss Madeline, daughter of Admiral Sir Edmond Slade; joined Gandhi's *ashram* 1925; also called Mira Ben and Mira Bai 403, 417, 445, 455, 463, 515
SLEEMAN, Maj.-Gen. Sir William Henry (1788–1856), administrator who during time of scarcity in 1833 refused to put a limit on market price of grain in the district of India in his charge 90
SLIM, Lt-Gen. William Joseph, G.O.C.-in-C., 14th Army, Burma 454, 538
SLOAN, Sir Tennant, I.C.S., an Adviser to the Governor of the United Provinces since 1939 244
SMITH, Frederick William, served as Deputy to the Adviser to the Viceroy on War Administration (Sir A. Rowlands q.v.) 660
SMITH, Norman Percival Arthur, I.P., Inspector General of Police, Bombay since 1942 199
SMUTS, Mrs Isie, wife of Field Marshal J. C. Smuts 238 enc.
SMUTS, Field Marshal Jan Christiaan, Prime Minister, Union of South Africa since 1939 21, 133, 137, 168, 171, 219, 230, 238, 242–3, 268, 278, 298, 370, 381, 447, 465, 482, 504, 508, 523, 527
SOMERVILLE, Admiral Sir James Fownes, C.-in-C. Eastern Fleet since 1942 527, 552, 670
SOONG, Dr T. V., Chinese Ambassador in Washington; brother of Madame Chiang Kai-shek 129
SORENSEN, Reginald William, M.P. (Lab.) for Leyton, West; Chairman, India League 25, 58, 68, 70, 156, 325, 468, 537, 591, 618
SPEAKER OF BENGAL LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY *see* NAUSHER ALI
SPENS, Sir (William) Patrick, K.C., M.P. (Con.) for Kent, Ashford 1933–43; Chief Justice of India since 8 June 1943 18, 31, 68, 70, 565, 617, 670
SQUIRE, Giles Frederick, I.C.S., Indian Political Service; Minister at Kabul from July 1943 674
SREENIVASAN (SRINIVASAN), Kasturi; Managing Editor, the *Hindu*, Madras; President, All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference 213
SRIVASTAVA, Dr Sir Jwala Prasad, Member for Civil Defence, Viceroy's Executive Council 1942–3; Food Member from 11 Aug. 1943 69–70, 97, 104, 118, 129, 132, 199, 238, 260, 278, 298, 305, 315, 323–4, 329, 333, 344, 370, 438, 447, 465, 515, 521, 525, 527, 531, 535, 565, 593, 600, 607, 617, 670, 676
STALIN, Generalissimo Joseph Vissarionovich, Chairman of the State Defence Committee and Peoples' Commissar for the Defence of the U.S.S.R. 242, 248
STAMPE, Sir William Leonard, Irrigation Adviser to the Govt of India 454
STANLEY, Col. Oliver Frederick George, M.P. (Con.) for Westmorland; Secretary of State for the Colonies since Nov. 1942 60, 71, 402, 413, 419, 433–4, 532, 575, 623
STEPHENSON, Hugh Southern, I.C.S., Secretary to Governor of the United Provinces since 1940 8, 418
STETTINIUS, Edward R., Under-Secretary of State, U.S. State Department 1943–4 675
STEVENS, Harold Samuel Eaton, I.C.S., Joint Chief Secretary and Chief Civil Defence Commissioner, Bengal, 1942–3; Food and Civil Supplies Commissioner from 18 Sept. 1943 76, 87, 93, 131, 138, 158, 213, 238, 301, 344, 357
STILWELL, Lt-Gen. Joseph W., Commanding General of U.S. Army forces in China–Burma–India area; Chief of Staff to Chiang Kai-shek and in command of Chinese forces in Burma since 1942 2, 17, 21, 408–9, 430–1, 480, 484, 486, 530, 603, 670
STONE, Sir (John) Leonard, Chief Justice, Bombay from Oct. 1943; President, Bombay Disaster Enquiry Commission May–Sept. 1944 478, 593

STOPFORD, Lt-Gen. Montagu George North, G.O.C.-in-C., 33rd Indian Corps, Burma, 1943–5 540
STRAKOSCH, Sir Henry, an adviser to the Secretary of State for India 1937–42; Hon. Financial Consultant to Secretary of State for India since 1942 32, 68
STREAT, Sir (Edward) Raymond, Chairman, the Cotton Board, Manchester 482
STUART, Maj.-Gen. Douglas, I.A.; on L. of C. duties in Bengal Nov. 1943 213, 277, 357
SUBBARAYAN, Dr Paramasiva, sometime Minister for Law, Madras; Member, All-India Congress Committee 1937–44 401
SUHRAWARDY, Huseyn Shaheed, Member for Civil Supplies (including Food), Bengal since April 1943 12, 27, 56, 70, 75, 124–5, 131, 137, 157–8, 175, 199, 213, 267, 277–8, 311, 315, 324, 381, 555
SULTAN AHMED, Sir, Law Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 1941–3; Member for Information and Broadcasting since May 1943 68, 97, 103–4, 129, 315, 414, 430, 454, 504–5, 527, 574, 600, 617
SUPREME ALLIED COMMANDER, S.E. ASIA *see* MOUNTBATTEN
SURGEON-GENERAL, BOMBAY *see* CANDY
SYFRET, Vice-Admiral Sir (Edward) Neville, Vice-Chief of the Naval Staff from 1943 119, 139
SYMONDS, J. Richard, Member of the Friends' Ambulance Unit in India; appointed Deputy Director of Relief and Rehabilitation, Bengal Aug. 1944 510

TALCHER, Ruler of 183
TARA SINGH, Master, Leader of the Akali Sikhs 73, 366, 516, 619, 671
TATA, Jehangir R. D., Chairman, Tata Sons Ltd, Bombay 344, 404, 510, 523, 527, 535
TAYLOR, Sir James Braid, I.C.S. retd, Governor of Reserve Bank of India 1937–Feb. 1943 when he died 552
TEMPLE, Most Reverend William, Archbishop of Canterbury since 1942 334, 370, 381, 511
THACKERSEY, Lady Premlila Vithaldas, Vice-Chancellor of Shreemati Nathibai Damadas Thackersey Women's University, Bombay; lived at Yeravda Hill, Poona 504
THAKURDAS *see* PURSHOTTAMDAS THAKURDAS
THOMPSON, Dr Edward, author, and sometime Missionary, Bankura College, Bengal 91
THORNE, Sir John Anderson, I.C.S., Secretary to Governor-General (Public) since 1938; Acting Home Member, Viceroy's Executive Council 4 April–22 July 1944 324, 333, 414, 490, 495, 504–5, 510, 521, 545, 557, 565, 592, 607, 670
TIDY, Maj.-Gen. Sir Henry Letheby, Army Medical Service; former Censor, Royal College of Physicians 635, 670
TOJO, General, Prime Minister, War Minister and Home Minister of Japan since 1941 37
TOTTENHAM, Sir (George) Richard Frederick, I.C.S., Additional Secretary, Home Dept, Govt of India since 1940 13, 51, 58, 127, 232, 351, 392, 425, 429–30, 669
TRIVEDI, Chandulal Madhavlal, I.C.S., Secretary, War Dept, Govt of India since 1942 24, 156, 298, 324
TURNBULL, Francis Fearon, Private Secretary to Secretary of State for India and Burma since 1941; accompanied Sir Stafford Cripps to India 1942 10, 16, 30, 108, 133, 170, 173, 191, 243, 246, 296, 493, 498 n., 521, 541, 574, 577, 581, 593, 601, 611
TWYNAM, Sir Henry Joseph, I.C.S., Governor of Central Provinces and Berar since 1940 13, 28–30, 35, 52–3, 60, 68, 72, 101, 183, 213, 234, 238, 244, 246, 250, 259, 261, 290–1, 298, 310, 414, 431, 443, 454, 462, 491, 494, 504, 506, 510, 521, 599, 640

UMAR HAYAT KHAN TIWANA, Maj.-Gen. Sir, father of Khizar Hyat Khan (q.v.) 452
USMAN, Sir Mahomed, Member for Posts and Air, Viceroy's Executive Council since 1942 97, 100, 104, 246, 250, 261, 315, 504–5, 527

VAIL, James G., Secretary, Foreign Service Section, American Friends Service Council since 1940; visited India 1944 510
VARADACHARIAR, Rao Bahadur Sir Srinivasa, Judge, Federal Court of India since 1939 91
VICTORIA, H.M. Queen (1819–1901), reigned 1837–1901; Empress of India from 1876 467
VIGOR, Harold Decimus, a Principal Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Food; loaned to Govt of India as Food Adviser 1943 13, 123
VILLIERS, Sir Edward, Member, Bengal Legislative Council 1924–6; President, European Association of India 1931–2; Vice-Chairman, Union of Britain and India 1933–5; employed by Ministry of Information in 1942 248, 278

WAKEHURST, 2nd Baron (John de Vere Loder), Governor of New South Wales since 1937 183, 209 n.
WAKELY, Maj.-Gen. Arthur Victor Trocke, I.A.; G.O.C. Lines of Communication Area; Director of Movements, Civil Supplies, Bengal from 1 Nov. 1943 193, 199–200, 208, 213, 277–8, 299, 357
WALL, J. E., a temporary Senior Officer at the Ministry of Food since 1939 413
WARDLAW-MILNE, Sir John, M.P. (Unionist) for Worcester, Kidderminster; business interests in Bombay and Calcutta; Chairman, Conservative Party India Committee 216
WARE, Frank, Animal Husbandry Commissioner, Imperial Council of Agricultural Research 156
WASHINGTON, George (1732–99), Commander-in-Chief of the American Forces in the War of Independence against the British 1775–83; 1st President of the United States 1789–97 4 n.
WAVELL, Capt. Archibald John Arthur, son of Lord Wavell 535, 541–2, 552
WAVELL, Field Marshal Sir Archibald Percival, Commander-in-Chief, India 1941–Jan. 1942 and Feb. 1942–June 1943; Viceroy-Designate from June 1943; Viscount 23 July 1943; assumed charge of office as Viceroy 20 Oct. 1943. *See note at head of this Index.* 1–4, 7, 10–11, 13–17, 22–4, 30, 34–5, 94, 108, 110, 116, 120, 128, 135, 137, 152, 159–60, 164, 168, 172–3, 304
WAVELL, Viscountess (Eugenie Marie Quirk), wife of Lord Wavell 13, 267, 381, 401, 417, 454, 552, 635
WAZALWAR, Tatyaji, Congress Party, Central Provinces 599
WEIZMANN, Chaim, Hon. Adviser to British Ministry of Supply since 1939; President, World Zionist Organisation and Jewish Agency for Palestine 1921–31 and since 1935 451 para. 7
WELLES, Sumner, U.S. Under-Secretary of State 1937–43 602
WELLINGTON, 1st Duke of (Arthur Wellesley; 1769–1852), defeated Napoleon at battle of Waterloo 1815; Prime Minister 1828–30 4
WESTCOTT, Most Reverend Foss, Bishop of Calcutta and Metropolitan of India, Burma and Ceylon since 1919 129, 278, 370
WESTROP, Brigadier Sidney A., Director of Open Cut Coal Mining, India from 1944 504
WHEELER, Lt-Gen. Raymond Albert, U.S. Army; Principal Administrative Officer, S.E. Asia Command 523, 670
WHEELER, Robert Eric Mortimer, Director-General, Archaeology in India from 1944 156
WHITE, Harry D., an Assistant to the Secretary of the United States Treasury; Director of Monetary Research 32

WICKENDEN, Thomas Douglas, I.C.S., a Judge in the Central Provinces 392, 446, 462
WILES, Sir Gilbert, I.C.S. retd, an Adviser to the Secretary of State for India since 1941 339
WILLIAMS, Arthur de Coetlogan, I.C.S., Secretary to the Governor of Bengal since 1942; Chief Secretary to Govt of Bengal and Chief Civil Defence Commissioner from 18 Sept. 1943 76, 82, 87, 90, 199 enc., 238, 301, 344–5
WILLIAMS, John Basil, an Assistant Secretary at the Colonial Office 413
WILLIAMS, Air Vice-Marshal Thomas Melling, Air Officer Commanding, Bengal Command, R.A.F. India 1943 199, para. 4
WILLINGDON, 1st Marquess of (Freeman Freeman-Thomas; 1866–1941), Viceroy 1931–6 559
WILLINGDON, 2nd Marquess of (Inigo Brassey Freeman-Thomas) 458
WILLINK, Henry Urmston, M.P. (Nat. Con.) for Croydon North; Minister of Health from 1943 388
WILSON, Sir Leonard, Chief Commissioner of Indian Railways since April 1941 451
WILSON, T., Office of the Paymaster General 413, 433, 453
WINANT, John Gilbert, U.S. Ambassador in Britain since 1941 610
WINGATE, Temp. Maj.-Gen. Orde Charles, Commander of Special Force, India Command until his death in March 1944 28, 103, 451, 454, 504
WINSTON *see* CHURCHILL
WODEHOUSE, Pelham Grenville, author 515
WOMERSLEY, Sir Walter James, M.P. (Unionist) for Grimsby; Minister of Pensions since 1939 388
WOOD, Maj.-Gen. Ernest, Secretary, Food Dept, Govt of India 1943 until Sept. 13, 70, 75
WOODHEAD, Sir John Ackroyd, I.C.S. retd, an Adviser to the Secretary of State for India since 1939; apptd Chairman of Famine Enquiry Commission 1944 339, 370, 412, 521, 545, 593, 607, 617, 635, 660, 674
WOOD, Sir Kingsley, M.P. (Con.) for Woolwich West; Chancellor of the Exchequer since 1940; Chairman of Cabinet Committee on Indian Financial Questions 1943; died 21 Sept. 1943 2, 61, 63–4, 71–2, 74, 107, 137, 390
WOOLLEY, Sir (Charles) Leonard, archaeologist and author 156
WOOLTON, 1st Baron (Frederick James Marquis), Minister of Food 1940–3; Minister of Reconstruction since 12 Nov. 1943 71, 142, 157, 219, 304, 320, 336–7, 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 439, 476, 482, 485, 521, 532, 575, 623, 629
WYLIE, Sir Francis Verner, I.C.S., British Minister at Kabul 1941–3; Political Adviser to Crown Representative from Aug. 1943 13, 62, 87, 100, 264, 324, 338, 350 n., 361, 401, 406–7, 467, 513, 568, 639

YAR JUNG, Nawab Bahadur, of Hyderabad 112
YOUNG, Maj. Sir Hubert Winthrop, Governor of Trinidad and Tobago 1938–42; Colonial Office 1943–4; European regional office UNRRA from 1944 580
YOUNG, Patrick Charles, arrived New Delhi 27 Dec. 1943 on appointment as Coal Commissioner. Had served with the Indian Railways for 12 years before the first world war 267, 333, 370, 381, 454, 504
YPRES, Field Marshal 1st Earl of (Sir John Denton Pinkstone French; 1852–1925), Commander-in-Chief, British expeditionary force in France 1914–15; Viscount French 1916; Earl of Ypres 1922 15

ZAFRULLAH KHAN, Chaudhri Sir Muhammad, Judge, Federal Court of India since 1941 68, 91
ZETLAND, 2nd Marquess of (Lawrence John Lumley Dundas), Secretary of State for India 1935–40 (also for Burma 1937–40) 458

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

The references are to Document Numbers.

ABYSSINIA 50
ACCHUTS *see* SCHEDULED CASTES
ADVISERS, NON-OFFICIAL *see* NON-OFFICIAL ADVISERS
ADVISERSHIP TO VICEROY ON WAR ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORTING STAFF 2, 17, 21, 28, 53, 72, 101, 199, 271, 325, 352
AFGHANISTAN 241–2
  employment of Indians at diplomatic posts in 674
AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT 36, 48, 52, 60, 113, 198, 259, 324, 336 enc., 552, 635, 670
AHMEDABAD 45, 404
AHMEDNAGAR: proposal to move Gandhi to, or re-detain him at if necessary *see under* GANDHI, M. K. *in Index of Persons*
AIR RAIDS 274
ALL-INDIA SPINNERS ASSOCIATION 404
ALL-INDIA STATES' PEOPLES' CONFERENCE 17
ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE *see* NON-PARTY LEADERS CONFERENCE
AMRITA BAZAR PATRIKA 161 enc., 208, 267
AMRITSAR DISTURBANCES (1919) 417
ANGLO-INDIANS 116 enc., 157, 635
ARAKAN CAMPAIGN 428, 438
ARGENTINA: food supplies from 354
ASSAM
  and food and economic situation 5, 27, 35, 102, 119 annex, 233, 238, 324, 426, 440, 454, 526
  political and general situation in 274, 447, 459 enc., 465, 527, 540, 607, 670
  position in Rajagopalachari's July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 590
  Wavell's visit to 267, 278
ASSISTANT PRIVATE SECRETARYSHIP TO VICEROY: proposal to Indianise *see under* VICEROYALTY
ASSOCIATED CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE: Wavell's speech to, at Calcutta *see under* CALCUTTA
ATLANTIC CHARTER 603
ATTACHMENT OF STATES *see Chapter 6 in Summary of Documents*
'AUGUST OFFER' (Statement issued by the Governor-General on 8 Aug. 1940, *see* Vol. I, App. I) 94 enc., 101, 110
AUSTRALIA
  exchange of High Commissioners with India *see Chapter 8 in Summary of Documents*; *also* 101, 494
  social and economic policy in 60
  wheat from, for India 66, 71, 121, 132, 185, 197, 203, 205, 207, 209, 219, 227, 290, 347, 372, 376 annex, 393, 397, 408, 432, 435, 438, 486, 524, 542, 548, 551, 674, 676
  contribution to world food requirements 354
  phosphate requirements of 434
  and Casey's appointment as Bengal Governor 211–12, 223, 226, 260, 263, 266, 290
  representation at War Cabinet 318, 514, 518, 533
  likely attitude on post-war tariff policy 401
  part in future Commonwealth defence 442
  attitude to India at Dominion P.M.s' Meeting 572
  wish for comprehensive Agreement with India 593, 618
  Indians in 593, 618
  model for Indian constitution 608, 670
AUSTRIA 50, 64
AXIS 37, 119 annex, 127, 417, 445
  see also GERMANY *and* JAPAN

BASIC ENGLISH 68
BASIC FOOD PLAN 13, 27, 44, 93, 95, 250

BENGAL
Famine, food and mortality situation *see Chapter 4 in Summary of Documents*
administrative and political questions and Governorship *see Chapter 5 in Summary of Documents*
actions of Calcutta High Court *see under* CALCUTTA
position in Rajagopalachari's July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 590
BENGAL COALITION PARTY 305, 324
BEVIN BOYS 344
BHORE COMMITTEE *see* HEALTH SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
BIG BUSINESS 21, 60, 94 enc., 100, 157, 161 enc., 404
proposed visit of Indian industrialists to U.K. and U.S. *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
see also BOMBAY PLAN
BIHAR
and food, economic and health situation 5, 27, 130, 158, 233, 238, 259, 324, 381, 414, 426, 440, 447, 457, 465, 526, 639
political and general situation in 13, 18, 45, 190, 404, 451, 462 enc., 481, 579, 608
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
1934 earthquake in 188, 226, 247 enc.
BIRLA PLAN *see* BOMBAY PLAN
BOMBAY
and food and economic situation 13, 62, 105, 121–2, 125, 132, 207, 299, 324, 333, 347, 354, 414, 466, 510, 515, 520–1, 526–7, 546, 574
political and general situation in 13, 404, 429, 462, 481, 510, 512, 515, 520–1, 546, 588, 607, 635, 639, 666
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
Linlithgow's visit to 91
Wavell's visit to 344
BOMBAY PLAN 344, 404, 438, 447–8, 451, 458, 510–11, 515, 521, 542
BOMBAY PORT 40
explosion and fire at 465, 478
BRETTON WOODS MONETARY CONFERENCE 578
'BRITANOVA' 103
'BRITASIAN' PROGRAMME 157
BRITISH BROADCASTING CORPORATION 103
BRITISH COUNCIL 439
proposed delegation to India 325, 334, 352, 370, 448, 454
BROADCASTING: development of Indian 447
BURMA 21, 50, 60, 63, 91, 95, 119 annex, 121, 132, 158, 165, 180, 193, 198, 263, 268, 346–7, 358, 367, 392, 428, 432, 442, 445, 451, 476, 522, 526–7, 538 enc., 541, 551, 603, 607, 672
appointment of G. of I's representative in 574

CABINET, BRITISH *see* WAR CABINET
CAIRO AND TEHERAN CONFERENCES (NOV.–DEC., 1943) 210, 242, 248
CALCUTTA 5, 12, 27, 33, 40, 70, 75–6, 78, 82, 90, 93, 95, 97, 100, 104, 119 annex, 121, 125, 129, 132, 138, 151, 158, 174–6, 180, 191 n., 193, 195, 199, 203, 208, 213, 230, 238, 242, 267, 277–8, 294, 299–302, 313–14, 324, 347, 354, 370, 381, 404, 430, 454, 457, 574, 576, 590, 593
High Court at 12, 18, 64, 70, 158, 345
Wavell's and Rutherford's tours of 125, 138, 158, 199, 277–8
Wavell's speech at, to Associated Chambers of Commerce 213, 250, 259, 267, 278, 280, 298
CANADA
proposed exchange of High Commissioners with India 34, 68, 101, 420, 431, 447, 449, 494, 510
grain offer to India 203, 205, 207, 209, 219, 226, 230, 234, 238, 432
wheat from, for India 347
precedent of, for raising Bajpai's status 242, 475
likely attitude on post-war tariff policy 401
part in future Commonwealth defence 442
Indians in 431, 510, 523, 535
model for Indian constitution 670
also 226, 334

CENSORSHIP 468, 527, 537, 617, 661, 672
policy in event of further fast by Gandhi 29–31, 46, 68, 70, 85, 103
CENTRAL PROVINCES
and food and economic situation 60, 175, 324, 333, 454, 457, 466, 510, 526–7
political and general situation in and Governorship 13, 244, 481, 506, 599
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
Wavell's visit to 414
CEYLON
Roy's Weekly on 91
Indian Agent in 30
Indian foodstuffs for 44, 67, 121, 132, 354, 358, 372, 413, 419, 422 and n., 423, 426, 430–1, 433–6, 439–40, 451, 453, 465–6
shipping demands of 66, 71, 139, 354, 372
move of S.E.A.C. to 310, 325
Indians in 401, 444, 510, 607
new constitution in 401, 447, 510, 565, 607
Indian labour for 465, 510, 607
CHAMBER OF PRINCES 111, 183, 230, 251, 296, 318, 395, 431, 447, 634, 676
CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE *see under* CHIEFS OF STAFF *in Index of Persons*
CHINA, CHINESE TROOPS 2, 4, 21, 30, 50, 103, 164, 187, 241–2, 248, 250, 259–60, 285, 408, 432, 531, 551, 603, 611
CHITTAGONG 56, 90, 119 annex, 175, 180 enc., 193, 199, 297, 401, 454, 593
CHRISTIAN NEWS LETTER 381
COAL SITUATION 230, 238, 267, 278, 310, 333, 370, 381, 438, 454, 504, 593
COCHIN *see* TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN
COMBINED FOOD BOARD 354
COMBINED SCIENTIFIC BOARD, WASHINGTON 482
COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF, INDIA: Auchinleck's appointment as 2–3, 7, 11, 13, 17, 28, 30, 35
COMMITTEE OF IMPERIAL DEFENCE 2–3
COMMONS, HOUSE OF *see* PARLIAMENT
COMMONWEALTH (BRITISH EMPIRE) 60, 94 enc., 110, 116 enc., 152, 155 enc., 159 annex, 164, 172 enc., 173 enc., 197, 205, 238 para. 10 and enc., 285, 325, 391, 399, 401, 421, 427, 429, 431, 442, 447, 462 enc., 475, 508, 535, 538 enc., 547, 572, 593, 645, *app.*
see also DOMINION PRIME MINISTERS' MEETING, MAY 1944
COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE 2, 94 enc., 421, 442, 511
see also INDIAN OCEAN: future defence policy in
COMMONWEALTH SUPPLY COUNCIL 362
COMMUNAL AWARD 459 enc., *app.*
COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDIA, COMMUNISTS 110, 127, 190, 462 enc., 666, 669
less active in States 607
CONGRESS, INDIAN NATIONAL
Amery on 21, 468
Churchill on 165
Colville on 429
Linlithgow on 53, 86, 156
Rajagopalachari on 161 enc.
Twynam on 60, 291, 456, 462 enc., 506
Wavell on 333, 370, 401, 417, 445, 462, 502, 507 enc.
and big business 21, 157, 404
and Mahasabha 57, 604
and Communist Party of India 127, 190, 669
co-operation with Muslim League over Finance Bill 438, 447, 456, 459 enc., 507 enc., 670
in context of general constitutional discussion 94 enc., 108, 110, 116 enc., 135 enc., 152, 155 enc., 160 enc., 168, 170, 231, 235, 527
attitude of, to Cripps Mission 290, 392
and Rajagopalachari and Gandhi July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 579, 581, 586, 588, 590, 593, 595, 599–600, 607, 626, 640, 650–1, 660, 666, 670, 673
likely reaction to further Indianisation of Executive Council 289
and Federal Court 510

CONGRESS, INDIAN NATIONAL (*cont.*):
preparations for any disturbances on anniversary of leaders' detention 45, 73
responsibility of, for 1942 disturbances 51, 53, 62, 188, 340, 351, 387, 392, 403, 417, 425, 445–6, 455, 462 enc.
question of consultations between Congress Working Committee and Gandhi 110, 188, 232, 417, 463, 479, 539, 541, 544, 550, 565, 577, 581–2, 586, 590–1, 593, 600, 605, 607, 609, 615–16
release of Congress prisoners 8, 70, 110, 116 enc., 128 enc., 135 enc., 152, 155 enc., 168, 188, 248, 340, 381 n., 392, 417, 462 enc., 481 enc., 492, 527, 586, 593, 599, 617–18, 625, 627, 660, 670
proposed visit to Congress prisoners by I.G. of Police Bombay 199 and n.
attitude of pre-war Congress Ministries 638
likely attitude of, to Executive Councils or Ministries in Section 93 Provinces 68, 481
likely effects of Congress Ministry in Bombay 429
intelligence report of Bombay Congress meeting, June 1944 599 enc.
Bengal Congress Party and relief measures 299
in N.-W.F.P. 366
also 72, 81, 89, 129, 218, 230, 358, 418, 448, 460, 494, 664
CONGRESS SOCIALIST PARTY 127, 404
CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE OF 1932 68
CONTAI *see* MIDNAPORE
COUNCIL OF SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH 198
COUNCIL OF STATE *see* INDIAN CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
CRIME: increases in 510, 537, 676
CRIPPS MISSION 80, 94 enc., 110–11, 152, 272, 338, 445, 588, 594, 615, 632, 650, 659
and contemporaneous Japanese advance 290, 333, 334 n., 508
see also DRAFT DECLARATION
CRIPPS OFFER *see* DRAFT DECLARATION
CZECHOSLOVAKIA 50
DACCA 90, 119 annex, 158, 175, 180, 193, 199, 208, 297, 401, 574
Wavell's visit to 277–8, 299
DAILY HERALD 81, 565
DAILY WORKER 17, 640, 660
DAWN 278, 401, 404, 574, 607, 670
DE BEERS' 72
DECCAN STATES AGENCY 17, 35, 62, 121–2, 175, 299, 316
DEFENCE SERVICES: food needs of 275–6, 292, 316, 321, 347, 363, 372, 408, 432, 438, 440, 448, 451, 453, 458, 465–6, 470, 476, 478, 480, 486, 525–6, 530, 537, 547, 668
DELHI IMPROVEMENT TRUST 259
DEPRESSED CLASSES *see* SCHEDULED CASTES
DEPUTY PRIVATE SECRETARYSHIP TO VICEROY: succession to *see under* VICEROYALTY
DISTRESS RELIEF FUND 187, 267
DOMINION PRIME MINISTERS' (IMPERIAL) CONFERENCE, 1921 133–4, 137
DOMINION PRIME MINISTERS' MEETING, MAY 1944
preparations for 133–4, 137, 206, 243, 332, 342, 362, 421, 442
Indian representation at *see* WAR CABINET: Indian representation at
Amery on proceedings of 494, 508, 511
Wavell on 515, 572
DOMINION STATUS 116 enc., 128 enc., 135 enc., 161 enc., 241 n., 285, 538 enc.
DOMINIONS 202, 230
see also COMMONWEALTH (BRITISH EMPIRE)
DRAFT DECLARATION (*see* Vol. I, No. 456) 50, 108, 110–11, 116 enc., 120, 128 enc., 135 enc., 152, 155 enc., 160 enc., 161 enc., 165, 290, 334, 392, 404, 417, 428, 445, 459 enc., 462, 467, 507 enc., 511, 569, 581–2, 586, 590–1, 593, 605, 607, 613, 618, 620–1, 623, 626, 630, 633–5, 640–1, 650, 653, 656, 660, 670 and enc., 673–4
see also CRIPPS MISSION

EAST AFRICA: Indians in 447
EASTERN GROUP SUPPLY COUNCIL 87, 156 n.
ECONOMIST, THE 510, 521
EDUCATIONAL REFORM 36, 48, 52, 60, 113, 198, 234, 238, 259, 325, 336 enc.
EGYPT 202, 358
procurement organisation in 197
EIRE: contribution to Indian famine relief 234, 259
EMPIRE AIR TRAINING SCHEME 352
EMPIRE, BRITISH *see* COMMONWEALTH
EMPIRE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION 404, 494, 508
EUROPEANS IN INDIA 87, 116 enc., 214, 670
see also MISSIONARIES, BRITISH
EVENING STANDARD: Low cartoons in 247 enc., 578, 607
EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
Phillips on 80
Twynam's suggestion for expanding 462 enc., 494
Wavell on 507 enc.
Wavell's Sept.–Oct. 1943 proposals for broadening Council 108, 110, 116 enc., 120, 128 enc., 152, 155 enc., 159 annex, 168
see also INDIANISATION *below*
Non-Party Conference's views for reconstruction of 481 enc.
and Rajagopalachari and Gandhi July 1944 proposals 586–7, 600, 607, 609, 616, 618, 626
idea of civilian War Member of 13, 28, 53
creation of separate Food Membership 69–70
filling of Home and Finance Memberships *see under* INDIANISATION *below*
creation of separate Planning and Development Membership and Dalal's appointment thereto 298, 324, 411, 430, 438–9, 447–8, 451, 454, 458, 509–10, 515, 519, 523, 527
Reconstruction Committee of 36, 113, 238, 259, 298, 324, 336 enc., 401, 438
speeches by Members of 103, 129
leaks by Members 230, 381
calibre of Members 381
and S. Africa situation 82, 87, 103, 129, 156, 230, 238 enc., 447, 454
and Bengal situation 97, 100, 109, 312, 315, 457
and Provincial attitudes on food 129, 250, 259, 333
and food imports 129, 144, 525, 552–3, 556, 565, 568
and Famine Enquiry 214–15, 221–2, 238, 324, 326, 353, 370
attitude to holding of Nov. 1943 Governors' Conference 199
and Ordinance to replace Defence Rule 26 230
and Feb.–Apr. 1944 proposal to increase rail fares 414, 430, 454
and Gandhi's release 496–7, 501, 504–5, 626
and Federal Court 515
and publication of Gandhi's correspondence 535
and Ceylon 565, 607
and question of Nehru's release 670
and war allowances for services 670
status of records of, and position in new telegraphic arrangements *app.*
also 2, 4, 13, 29–30, 35, 46, 51, 54, 58, 62, 68, 80, 94, 156, 199, 213, 233–4, 278, 298, 324, 346, 352, 401, 426, 431, 447, 453, 504, 515, 527
INDIANISATION OF
Amery on 94 enc., 101, 128 enc., 157, 183, 268, 289–90, 537
Gandhi on 417
Mudaliar on 34
Noon on 618
Wavell on 116 enc., 135 enc.
as substitute for immediate constitutional advance 94 enc., 101, 183, 268, 289–90, 508
Linlithgow's views on Indianisation of Home or Finance Memberships; his recommendations for portfolios; and Amery's reactions 13, 28, 35, 53, 68, 72, 157
consideration of Wavell's proposal to Indianise Finance Membership and related question of Home Membership

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL (*cont.*):
INDIANISATION OF (*cont.*):
213, 234, 244, 246, 250, 256, 259–61, 268, 270, 281–2, 286, 288–90, 298, 303
Cabinet decision against Indianisation 304, 305 para. 7, 307, 331
subsequent discussion on filling portfolios 310, 324–5, 333–4, 346, 360, 369–71, 381, 399, 401, 414
decision to extend Raisman's tenure as Finance Member 390
question of Indianising Finance Membership in 1945 552, 568, 593

FAMINE ENQUIRY: demands for *and* establishment of *see Chapter 4 in Summary of Documents*
FEDERAL COURT 68, 91, 101, 565
extension of jurisdiction of *see* INDIAN JUDICIARY AND JUDICIAL SYSTEM
FEDERATION OF INDIAN CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY 404
FINANCE MEMBERSHIP *see under* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: INDIANISATION OF
FOOD CONFERENCES, DELHI 27, 30, 33, 75, 121, 156, 166, 324, 333, 347
FOOD MEMBERSHIP: creation of separate *see under* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
FOOD SITUATION *see Chapter 4 in Summary of Documents*; *also* DEFENCE SERVICES: food needs of
FOODGRAINS CONTROL ORDER 93, 121, 175, 197, 233, 294, 301–2, 314, 316, 474
FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE (GREGORY COMMITTEE) 69, 75, 121, 123, 129, 132, 137, 141, 156, 162, 166, 180, 182, 191, 193, 197, 199, 203, 222, 233, 275, 292, 316, 339, 347, 358, 364, 453, 466, 565–6, 672
extract from Conclusions of 347 app. II
FORWARD BLOC 127
FRANCE 64, 103, 242, 421, 531, 594, 635, 672
FREE PRESS JOURNAL 577, 593
FREE TRADE between Provinces in foodgrains 5, 13, 27, 44, 121, 158, 175
FRIENDS' AMBULANCE UNIT 199 enc. 1, 510

GENERAL ELECTRIC COMPANY 451
GERMANY, GERMANS 64, 103, 113, 117, 164–5, 334, 417, 421, 431, 451, 635, 672
mediatisation of German States 467 and n., 513, 634
GLASGOW HERALD 81, 126, 137
GOLD SALES *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
GOVERNORS' CONFERENCES
Nov. 1943 187, 199, 213, 234, 237–8, 240, 242, 253, 255, 259, 268, 336 enc., 337, 462 enc.
Papers 197–8
Minutes (extract) 233
Aug. 1944 510, 607, 617, 639, 660, 670
GREECE 157
GREGORY COMMITTEE *see* FOODGRAINS POLICY COMMITTEE
GROUNDNUTS 354, 358, 408, 414
GROUPING OF STATES *see Chapter 6 in Summary of Documents*
GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN 132, 180, 260, 292, 298, 447, 465, 510, 526, 552
GUJARAT 17, 45, 188
GURDWARAS ACT, PUNJAB 73

HAJ PILGRIMAGE, 1944: arrangements for 490, 527, 550 and n., 552, 574, 618, 660, 670
HARIJAN 247 enc., 506
HARVARD COLLEGE 80
HEALTH SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (BHORE COMMITTEE) 113, 198, 238, 336 enc., 521, 580, 617, 660
HINDU 51, 213, 574
HINDUS 60, 62, 73, 76, 94 enc., 97, 109, 113, 116 enc., 152, 156, 158, 162, 172 enc., 213, 235, 246, 247 enc., 278, 320, 322, 325, 328, 334, 404, 417, 459 enc., 462, 465, 478, 481, 507, 510–11, 516, 538 enc., 543, 565, 574, 576, 599–600,

HINDUS (*cont.*):
604, 607–9, 615, 619, 622, 626, 629, 632, 635, 637, 659–60, 664–5, 670–1
HINDUSTAN 242, 443, 459 enc., 462 enc., 574
HINDUSTAN TIMES 84, 351, 454, 490, 565, 574, 595, 605, 674
HOME MEMBERSHIP *see under* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: INDIANISATION OF
HURS 537
HYDERABAD 20, 324, 343, 511, 607
Poetry Society at 334

IMPERIAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE 156
IMPERIAL AIRWAYS 371
IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES 36 451, 523
IMPERIAL COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH 113
INDEPENDENCE DAY (CONGRESS) 345, 351, 366, 370
INDIA COMMITTEE *see* WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON INDIA
INDIAN ARMY
proposed reduction in strength of 17–18, 30, 346, 370
use of, in Bihar 18
use of, in Bengal 97, 125, 193, 199 and encs. 2–4, 200, 213, 230, 277, 299, 301, 352, 357, 370, 381, 414, 438, 447, 451, 465
subversive activities in 67, 127
its contribution to war effort and suggestion of book on 70, 519
its rôle overseas, after end of European war 91, 672
suggested return of Middle East and Italian formations 107, 438
effect of food situation on morale of 119 enc., 132, 432, 551
idea of transfers to Indian services by members of 271 and n., 280
fresh officers for 325
and Drew Pearson article 603, 660
food needs of *see* DEFENCE SERVICES: food needs of
also 2–3, 86, 126, 129, 139, 156, 165, 316

INDIAN CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
Linlithgow's farewell address to, Aug. 1943 39, 62, 65, 68, 72, 77, 81, 84, 87
Wavell's address to, Feb. 1944 290, 298, 310, 333, 370, 381, 395, 399–401, 417, 431, 438, 464, 469, 520, 612
also 213, 324, 326, 414
COUNCIL OF STATE 238, 339, 438, 447
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
and S. Africa 82 n., 370
and demands for famine enquiry 214, 221, 230, 234, 238, 260
and operation of Restriction and Detention Ordinance 370, 387, 403, 417
and proposed increase in rail fares 430
question of fresh elections to 468, 481 enc.
also 70, 370, 387, 438, 510
INDIAN CHRISTIANS 305, 481
see also MISSIONARIES, BRITISH
INDIAN COUNCILS ACT, 1909 *see* MORLEY–MINTO REFORMS
INDIAN FEDERATION OF LABOUR 537 542 574, 618, 670
INDIAN FINANCE COMMITTEE *see* WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON INDIAN FINANCIAL QUESTIONS
INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE
at Singapore 37
at Bangkok 119 annex
INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 454
INDIAN JUDICIARY AND JUDICIAL SYSTEM 18, 64, 70, 278, 305, 344, 510, 515, 565, 617, 670
see also CALCUTTA: High Court at *and* FEDERAL COURT
INDIAN LIBERALS 110, 310, 333, 370, 507 enc., 519, 527, 670, 674
INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY 37
INDIAN OCEAN: future defence policy in 523
see also COMMONWEALTH DEFENCE
INDIAN PRESS (EMERGENCY POWERS) ACT 345
INDIAN RESERVE BANK 53, 61, 205, 260, 270, 289, 304, 331, 552
INDIAN SCIENCE CONGRESS, JAN. 1944 324

INDIAN SERVICES
Linlithgow on Indianisation of 156
planning for Provincial post-war needs 48, 198, 249, 253 and n., 271n. *see also* ROWLAND SURVEY OF INDIAN SERVICES *and* ROWLANDS ENQUIRY INTO BENGAL ADMINISTRATION: establishment of training for 48, 305, 344
state of 60, 70, 76, 92, 97, 113, 151, 156, 158, 192, 199, 213, 234, 238, 242, 249, 259, 267, 278, 301–2, 310, 357, 526, 538 enc., 635, 670
'victimisation' of 68
question of resuming European recruitment to I.C.S. and I.P. 238, 249, 253, 268–9, 271–2, 278, 298, 450, 522, 532, 537, 552
discussed at Governors' Conference, Nov. 1943 237–8
idea of re-employing retired members of 271 n., 378
use of Army personnel to assist, *and* idea of transfers from Army to services *see under* INDIAN ARMY
additional war leave and allowances for 510, 670
policy on associations with Congress by members of I.C.S. 527, 537
financial position of 574
also 18, 48–9, 52, 119, 320, 582, 660
INDIAN STATES *see Chapter 6 in Summary of Documents*; *also* 53, 116 enc., 128 enc., 155 enc., 161 enc., 163 enc., 213, 334, 341, 367, 370, 417, 424, 475, 510, 526, 568, 582, 623, 629, 632, 640, 650, 653, 656, 659
INDIAN STATES COMMITTEE 1928–9 (BUTLER COMMITTEE) 350
INDIAN STERLING BALANCES *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
INDUSTRIALISTS, INDIAN: proposed visit of, to U.K. and U.S. *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
INFLATION *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
INGLIS–APPLETON REPORT ON RAILWAYS IN INDIA 438
INSTITUTE OF PACIFIC RELATIONS: Conference at Mont Tremblant, Dec. 1942 48
INSTRUMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONS, GOVERNORS' 6, 26, 46, 109, 537, 618
INTER-IMPERIAL OFFICIAL COMMITTEE ON POST-WAR ECONOMICS 431
INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION: proposed Eastern Regional Conference of 48, 52 n., 113
INTERNATIONAL WHEAT AGREEMENT 354
IRAQ 202
barley for India 66, 71–2, 74, 87, 98, 132, 139, 142, 148, 157, 185, 207, 226–7, 347, 372, 376 annex, 378, 391, 393, 674
IRAQ CURRENCY BOARD 202
IRELAND *see* EIRE
ITALY 64, 70, 103, 117, 421, 432
food requirements of 354
Indian troops in 438, 518–19

JAPAN, JAPANESE 2–4, 37, 60–1, 66–7, 70, 78, 91, 94 enc., 110, 113, 116 enc., 119, 127, 135 enc., 152, 155 enc., 160 enc., 163 enc., 165, 168, 172 enc., 173 enc., 197–9, 248, 274, 314, 316, 345–6, 351, 387, 392, 403–4, 417, 421, 425, 438, 442, 445, 447, 454–5, 461, 486, 527, 547, 603, 618, 629, 639
propaganda campaign against Japanese treatment of P.O.Ws. 238
JINNAH–SIKANDER PACT *see* SIKANDER–JINNAH PACT
JOINT COMMITTEE ON INDIAN CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM 111, 178
JUDICIAL COMMITTEE OF THE PRIVY COUNCIL 305

KARACHI 30, 40
KASHMIR 88, 99, 115, 136, 153, 157, 368, 385
KHAKSARS 62, 86, 666
KHILAFAT AGITATION 456, 672
KOLHAPUR SUCCESSION 111
KONINKLIJKE LUCHTVAART MAATSCHAPPIJ (ROYAL DUTCH AIRLINES) 371

LABOUR PARTY (BRITISH): deputation on Indian food situation 292, 305
LEADER 595
LEAGUE OF NATIONS 348, 475, 606, 621, 645
LEASE–LEND 61, 87, 202, 285, 475, 523
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY *see* INDIAN CENTRAL LEGISLATURE
LINLITHGOW AGRICULTURAL COMMISSION 60, 113
LONDON FOOD COUNCIL 362
LORDS, HOUSE OF *see* PARLIAMENT
LOTTERY LOAN: proposal for, and issue of, Indian 32, 40, 72, 87, 101, 117, 146, 268, 278, 298, 334, 370
LUCKNOW PACT, 1916 459 enc.

MADRAS
and food and economic situation 44, 121–2, 130, 132, 213, 230, 233, 259, 278, 299, 324, 333, 344, 347, 352, 370, 510, 521, 526, 574, 670
political and general situation in 451, 481, 537, 673
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
Linlithgow's visit to 87
Wavell's visit to 401
MADRAS PORT 40
MAHASABHA 53, 57, 97, 110, 116 enc., 310, 315, 324, 370, 462 enc., 507 enc., 574, 576–7, 588, 590, 600, 604, 607, 609, 616, 666, 674
MALAYA 63, 121, 165, 198, 392, 428
MANCHESTER GUARDIAN 81, 87, 129, 156, 574
MARWARIS 75, 358, 404, 535
MERGER OF STATES *see Chapter 6 in Summary of Documents*
MESOPOTAMIA COMMISSION (1916–17) 156
MIDDLE EAST 1–2, 4, 66, 71, 139, 142, 157, 210, 219, 279–80, 285, 354, 380, 389, 391, 393, 433, 438, 451
MIDNAPORE 158, 180 enc., 193, 199, 297
Wavell's and Rutherford's tours of 151, 158, 193, 199 and enc. 1
MINISTERIAL ASSISTANT TO VICEROY: proposal for *see* ADVISERSHIP TO VICEROY ON WAR ADMINISTRATION AND SUPPORTING STAFF
MISSIONARIES, BRITISH 53, 72
MORLEY–MINTO REFORMS 459 enc., 546
MORTALITY SITUATION *see Chapters 4 and 5 in Summary of Documents*
MOSCOW CONFERENCE OF ALLIED FOREIGN SECRETARIES, OCT.–NOV. 1943 645
MUSLIM LEAGUE
Amery on 21
Khaliquzzaman on 459 enc.
Linlithgow on 53
Twynam on 291, 443, 456, 462 enc.
Wavell on 310, 333, 370, 462, 507 enc., 515
and Communist Party of India 127, 669
co-operation with Congress over Finance Bill *see under* CONGRESS, INDIAN NATIONAL
in context of general constitutional discussion 110, 116 enc., 135 enc.
and Rajagopalachari and Gandhi July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 581, 586, 590, 593, 596, 599, 607, 609, 617, 627, 660, 666
attitude to Executive Council appointments 246, 289, 527
and Federal Court 278, 510
likely attitude to Executive Councils in Section 93 Provinces 68
likely reaction to Section 93 in Bengal 97, 301, 310–11, 315, 320, 527, 541
and Punjab 49, 55, 73, 86, 118, 129, 250, 301, 316, 447, 452, 460–1, 465, 469, 477–8, 490, 493, 503–4, 510, 516–17, 521, 527–8, 535, 541, 552, 565, 574, 619, 670–1
in N.-W.F.P. 89, 96, 112, 118, 366, 549
and Sind 574, 607, 617
also 230, 418
MUSLIMS 57, 60, 88, 91, 100, 108–9, 115, 116 enc., 128, 135 enc., 152–3, 155 enc., 156, 158, 160 enc., 161 enc., 163 enc., 172 enc., 213, 242, 246, 247 enc., 278, 316, 320, 322, 325, 328, 334, 404, 417–18, 459 enc., 462, 465, 477–8, 481, 503,

MUSLIMS (*cont.*):
507 enc., 538 enc., 543, 565, 574, 576, 581, 588, 590–1, 595, 599–600, 604, 607–8, 615, 618–19, 622, 626, 629, 632, 637–8, 659–60, 665, 670–2, 676
MYSORE 44, 87, 119 annex, 130, 324, 607

NAGAS 527, 593, 617
NAGPUR TIMES 506
NATIONAL CALL 351
NATIONAL DEFENCE COUNCIL 11, 30, 156, 199, 213, 234, 259, 267, 278, 324, 333, 465, 607, 617
NATIONAL NEWS LETTER 238
NATIONAL WAR FRONT 103, 129, 149, 248, 419, 607, 617, 619
NEPAL 82
NEW INDIA PLANNING GROUPS 48
NEW STATESMAN 91
NEW YORK TIMES 404
NEW ZEALAND 66, 71, 352, 401, 434, 442, 593
NEWS CHRONICLE 81, 333, 443, 574, 577, 584, 590, 593
NINTH AUGUST 404
NON-OFFICIAL ADVISERS 569, 571
possible use of, in Bengal 301
possible use of, in Bombay 607, 635, 639
see also SECTION 93 PROVINCES
NON-PARTY LEADERS CONFERENCE 62, 70, 465, 480, 521, 541
see also INDIAN LIBERALS
NORTH-WEST FRONTIER PROVINCE
and food and economic situation 238, 257, 259, 267, 275, 324, 333, 352, 526
political and general situation in 89, 96, 112, 238, 366, 404, 447, 517, 537, 549
Wavell's visit to 250
also 21, 118

ORISSA
and food and economic situation 5, 13, 27, 158, 203, 213, 230, 233, 238, 324, 426, 440, 454, 526
political and general situation, including Ministerial crisis in 447, 465, 510, 521, 527, 535, 541, 550, 552, 564–5, 574–5, 607, 670
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
Wavell's visit to 267
also 287, 356, 417, 494
OTTAWA TRADE AGREEMENTS, 1932 371

PAKISTAN
Amery on 664
Big Business and 404
and economic development 638
in context of general constitutional discussion 34, 108, 110, 116 enc., 128 enc., 291, 305, 310, 334, 370, 437, 439, 443, 456, 459 enc., 462, 469, 494, 507 enc., 527, 537
and Rajagopalachari's July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 588, 590, 593, 599, 617, 619, 630, 640, 660, 666, 671
and Punjab 49, 55, 73, 452, 460, 510
and N.-W.F.P. 112
PALESTINE 202, 280
PANCHAYATS 103
PARLIAMENT
HOUSE OF COMMONS
and Gandhi's correspondence with Linlithgow and Govt of India 25, 58, 62, 68, 70
and Indian sterling balances 61, 63–4, 591, 594, 596
and food situation (including debate of 4 Nov. 1943) 105, 137, 140, 144, 166, 175, 180, 182, 191, 193, 201, 209, 216, 219, 304, 553
and Bengal 157, 166, 175, 180, 191, 193
and constitutional situation (including debate of 28 July 1944) 231, 235, 468, 519, 573, 578, 582, 586–7, 590–1, 593–4, 596, 600, 607, 609, 615, 617–18, 623, 632, 638, 641, 659
and S. Africa pegging legislation 248
announcement of Dominion P.Ms' Meeting 342
and use of women in Indian mines 346, 355, 370

PARLIAMENT (*cont.*):
and Attachment Bill 401, 419, 431
Butler's statement on Mrs Gandhi's death 417, 445, 455
and Indian censorship 468, 527, 537
and release of Gandhi 499, 511
and post-war monetary scheme 508
and organisations subsidised by G. of I. 537
HOUSE OF LORDS
and Attachment Bill 401, 431
debate of 25 July 1944 on constitutional and food situation 590, 594, 600, 605, 607, 614
PARLIAMENTARY MEDICAL GROUP 511, 520
PEACE CONFERENCE AND POST-WAR SETTLEMENT
on proposed agenda of Dominion Prime Ministers' Meeting 421, 442
Indian participation in 481 enc., 606
see also UNITED NATIONS: establishment of permanent organisation
PEOPLE'S PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA (ROY PLAN) 438, 451, 542
PEOPLE'S WAR 127
PERMANENT SETTLEMENT 193 n., 454
PERSIA 241
employment of Indians at diplomatic posts in 674
PERSIAN GULF 67
PILGRIMS SOCIETY: Wavell's speech to, Sept. 1943 126, 137
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT MEMBERSHIP: creation of *see under* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
POETRY REVIEW 334
POPULATION: control of 48, 60, 113
PORTUGAL 354
PRESS
controlling and advising 2, 4, 25, 77, 81, 84, 87, 126, 195, 201, 280, 351, 356 *see also* CENSORSHIP
British 11, 17, 72, 143, 199 enc. 2, 248, 324, 401, 468, 573
Indian 13, 30, 42, 55, 73, 90, 123, 213, 259, 290, 324, 345, 381, 399, 401, 447, 465, 503–4, 527, 535, 538 enc., 552, 565–6, 568, 574, 576, 579, 581, 590, 593, 599, 607, 617, 619, 651, 660, 669, 670, 674
see also entries for individual newspapers
PRINCES *see* INDIAN STATES
PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE: Secretary of State's, Viceroy's and Governors' 156, 183, 310, 414, 527, *app.*
PRIVATE SECRETARYSHIP TO VICEROY: succession to *see under* VICEROYALTY
PUBLIC HEALTH AND MORTALITY SITUATION *see Chapters 4 and 5 in Summary of Documents*
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES: post-war planning for 36, 48, 113, 198, 234, 238, 259, 298, 336 enc.
see also HEALTH SURVEY AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
PUNCH 635
PUNJAB
and food and economic situation 13, 36, 78, 86, 113, 125, 129–30, 138, 146–9, 156, 158, 169, 175, 191, 199, 203, 207–8, 213, 226, 230, 233, 238, 242, 248, 250, 257, 259, 267–8, 275, 278, 294–5, 301, 316, 321, 324, 333, 344, 347, 352, 370, 378, 381–2, 408, 414, 447, 457, 466, 510, 526, 547, 553, 565, 574, 593
political and internal situation in 49, 55, 70, 73, 86, 118, 126, 129, 147, 156, 250, 301, 316, 351, 404, 447, 452, 459 enc., 460–1, 465, 469, 477–8, 482, 490, 493, 503–4, 510, 516–17, 521, 527–8, 535, 541, 552, 565, 574, 593, 607, 619, 638, 670
position in Rajagopalachari's July 1944 proposals 574, 576, 590, 671
Wavell's visits to 238, 250, 381

QUEBEC CONFERENCE, AUG. 1943 72 n., 91
'QUIT BRITAIN' PROGRAMME 381, 439, 454

RADICAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY 381, 507 enc., 537

RAILWAY FARES: proposed increase in, Feb.–Apr. 1944 381, 414, 430, 451, 454, 456
RAJPUTANA 157, 466
RAMGARH: Chinese troops at 346
RATIONING AND PROCUREMENT *see Chapters 4 and 5 in Summary of Documents*
RED SHIRTS 89
REFORM, CONSTITUTIONAL
possibility of immediate 2, 4, 126, 209, 494, 520
Indianisation of Council as substitute for *see under* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL: INDIANISATION OF
idea of fact-finding enquiry on constitution 34, 68, 101, 108, 116 enc., 128 enc., 135 enc., 231, 235, 248, 278, 290, 333–4, 370, 494, 507 enc., 520, 546, 618, 670 enc.
relevance of Swiss experience *see* SWISS SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT
London constitutional discussions Sept.–Oct. 1943 *see Chapter 2 in Summary of Documents*
Cabinet directive to Wavell 172 enc.
issues arising from Rajagopalachari and Gandhi July 1944 proposals *see Chapter 3 in Summary of Documents*
proposal for amending federal provisions of 1935 Act 94 enc., 618, 660, 670 enc.
proposal for temporary constitution imposed by H.M.G. 101, 618
REFORM, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*; *also* AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, BROADCASTING, EDUCATIONAL REFORM, INDIAN SERVICES, POPULATION, PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES, TOWN PLANNING AND SLUM CLEARANCE, TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS
REFUGEES in India 527
REPORT ON THE DISTURBANCES 1942–3 (WICKENDEN REPORT) 392, 446, 462
RESTRICTION AND DETENTION ORDINANCE, 1944 340 annexes and notes, 345, 351, 356, 455
ROUND TABLE CONFERENCES 68 n., 116 enc., 135 enc., 437, 462 enc., 595
ROWLAND SURVEY OF INDIAN SERVICES 490, 558, 562, 565, 580 and n., 593, 598
see also INDIAN SERVICES
ROWLANDS ENQUIRY INTO BENGAL ADMINISTRATION: establishment of 521, 538 enc., 545, 558, 562, 565, 568, 580, 593, 598, 660, 676
ROWLATT ACTS, 1919 455
ROY PLAN *see* PEOPLE'S PLAN FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA
ROY'S WEEKLY 91
ROYAL AIR FORCE: message on India by members of 660
ROYAL EMPIRE SOCIETY 535
ROYAL INDIAN NAVY 325, 352
ROYAL SOCIETY 324, 352, 451, 482

SCHEDULED CASTES 53, 60, 70, 110, 116 enc., 156, 418, 452, 462 enc., 481, 507 enc., 538 enc., 629–30, 632, 635, 637, 653, 656, 659, 670
SCIENTISTS, INDIAN: proposed visit to U.K. and U.S. *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
SCOTSMAN 126
SECTION 57 (GOVERNMENT OF INDIA ACT, 1935): proposed amendment of 124–5, 129, 131, 140, 146, 150, 154, 158, 176, 197, 301
SECTION 93 PROVINCES
possibility of forming Ministries in 13, 68
suggestions for establishing Executive Councils in 34, 68, 280, 508, 546, 569, 635
Non-Party Conference's call for coalition Ministries in 481, 508, 520, 546, 569
Wavell on desirability of coalition govts. in 507 enc., 569
see also NON-OFFICIAL ADVISERS
SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY 344, 370
SERVICES *see* INDIAN SERVICES
SHIROMANI GURDWARA PRABANDHAK COMMITTEE 73
SIKANDER–BALDEV SINGH PACT 49, 73
SIKANDER–JINNAH PACT 73, 118, 447, 452, 503, 516, 527

SIKHS 49, 70, 73, 110, 112, 116 enc., 366, 459 enc., 478, 510, 516, 586, 600, 607, 616, 619, 660, 670–1
SILVER SALES *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
SIND
and food and economic situation 35, 53, 113, 121, 130, 230, 233, 238, 242, 259, 267–8, 275, 278, 316, 324, 347, 510, 526, 565
political and general situation in 35, 49, 53, 113, 275, 301, 510, 537, 543, 574, 607, 617, 627
also 381
SOUTH AFRICA
shipping demands of 66
Indians in, and question of Govt of India adopting retaliatory action against 82, 87, 91, 103, 129, 156, 230, 238, 242, 248, 268, 278, 298, 370, 381, 447, 454, 457, 508, 618
Wavell's letter to Smuts of 23 Nov. 1943 238 enc.
Smuts tel. to Wavell of 7 Feb. 1944 370 n.
conclusion of Pretoria agreement and difficulties in its implementation 465, 478, 482, 504, 508, 510, 515, 527, 535
food offer of, to India 219, 238 enc.
likely attitude on post-war tariff policy 401
part in future Commonwealth defence 442, 523
attitude to India at Dominion Prime Ministers' Meeting 572
High Commission territories in 635
SOUTH-EAST ASIA COMMAND
formation of, and issue of its relation to India Command 2–3, 11, 13–14, 17–18, 28, 30, 35, 53, 72, 87, 103, 129
appointment of Supreme Commander 18, 21, 53, 72, 87, 103
move of, to Ceylon 310, 325
also 110, 116, 155 enc., 156, 160 enc., 222, 234, 242, 248, 263, 301, 314, 432, 438, 447, 451, 454, 480, 486, 537, 626, *app.*
SOUTHERN RHODESIA 103
SPAIN 50
SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES, GOVERNORS' 49, 55, 178, 283, 301, 308, 313, 320, 322, 356, 381, 477
STATES, INDIAN *see* INDIAN STATES
STATUTE OF WESTMINSTER 133 n. *see also* DOMINION STATUS
STATESMAN 30, 138, 213, 259, 267, 346, 381, 490, 527, 538 enc., 566, 574, 595
STERLING BALANCES *see Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
SUNDAY PICTORIAL 670
SWISS SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT 17, 46, 70, 94 enc., 103, 116 enc., 117, 183, 213, 268, 280, 550
TATA PLAN *see* BOMBAY PLAN
TATA SONS LTD. 63, 510
TEHERAN CONFERENCE (NOV.–DEC. 1943) *see* CAIRO AND TEHERAN CONFERENCES
TELEGRAMS: length of 245, 248, 250, 252
THAILAND 119 annex
THIRD (UNOFFICIAL) BRITISH COMMONWEALTH RELATIONS CONFERENCE, 1945: preparations for 454
TIMES OF INDIA 396, 593, 674
TIMES, THE 13, 17, 72, 129, 187, 280, 320, 325, 510, 515, 521, 523, 565
TOLSTOY FARM, SOUTH AFRICA 417
TOWN PLANNING AND SLUM CLEARANCE 36, 198, 259
TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATIONS: development of 36, 52, 198, 324, 336 enc.
see also INGLIS–APPLETON REPORT ON RAILWAYS IN INDIA
TRAVANCORE AND COCHIN 44, 66, 100, 105, 119 annex, 121–2, 130, 132, 175, 197, 203, 213, 230, 278, 299, 324, 333, 344, 347, 370, 408, 607, 617, 639, 660
TRIBUNE 68
TURKEY 60, 113
TWENTY-FOUR PARGANAS *see* CALCUTTA

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (RUSSIA) 3, 60, 113, 198, 248, 397, 508, 535, 594
UNIONIST PARTY, PUNJAB 73, 118, 250, 447, 452, 460–1, 462 enc., 465, 469, 477, 493, 503–4, 510, 516, 521, 528, 541, 574, 593, 619, 670–1
UNITED NATIONS 4, 116 enc., 164, 173 enc., 197, 199 enc. 2, 285, 292, 314, 316, 347 app. II, 350, 376 annex, 445, 465–6, 538 enc., 574, 603, 606
Conference on Food and Agriculture May–June 1943 285, 475
Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (U.N.R.R.A.) 285, 344, 348, 382, 391, 397, 475, 527
establishment of permanent organisation and position of India therein 601, 611, 621, 645
UNITED PROVINCES
and food and economic situation 158, 175, 213, 233, 238, 257, 259, 267, 275, 324, 333, 344, 370, 381, 414, 454, 457, 466, 504, 510, 526, 565, 660
political and general situation in 13, 404, 418, 451, 465, 481, 520, 546, 574, 595
in Union proposed by Rajagopalachari 161 enc.
Wavell's tour of 344
also 593
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AMERICANS
concern of, over India *see Chapter 8 in Summary of Documents*
proposal to elevate status of Indian Agent-General in *see ibid*
offer of foodgrains to India 132
food requirements of 354
idea of approach to, for help in shipping food to India 378 and n., 382, 384, 389, 391, 397, 402, 408–9, 413, 419, 430, 432, 434–5, 439–41, 444, 448, 453, 458, 466, 470, 472, 476, 480, 482, 484–5, 488–90, 508, 515
Churchill's tel. of 29 Apr. 1944 to Roosevelt 486
Roosevelt's reply of June 1944 524
reactions to reply 523, 527, 530–1
question of informing Roosevelt of Govt of India's press statement on imports 561
publicity arrangements for India in 285, 424
Asiatic exclusion legislation of 242, 285, 431, 447, 475
also 2–3, 21, 29–30, 32, 63–4, 91, 94 enc. 103, 108, 137, 155 enc., 161 enc., 164–5, 168, 172 enc., 187, 197–8, 205, 220, 230, 325, 352, 358, 397, 430, 508, 535, 541, 593, 613, 636, 639, 672
UNTOUCHABLES *see* SCHEDULED CASTES

VERSAILLES TREATY 475, 606, 621
VICEROYALTY
Wavell's appointment, questions of his tenure and of creating him Viscount 1–4, 7, 9–11, 13–17, 30, 35
succession to Private Secretaryship and Deputy Private Secretaryship to Viceroy; proposal to Indianise Assistant Private Secretaryship 22–4, 30, 35
VICEROY'S EXECUTIVE COUNCIL *see* EXECUTIVE COUNCIL
VICEROY'S SECRETARIAT 101, 156

WAR CABINET: Indian representation at, and at Dominion Prime Ministers' Meeting, May 1944 17, 35, 70, 133–4, 137, 156, 206, 243, 296, 318, 332, 342, 362, 368, 371, 385, 421, 427, 430, 442, 511, 514, 518, 521, 533, 536
see also Chapter 8 in Summary of Documents
WAR CABINET CHIEFS OF STAFF COMMITTEE *see under* CHIEFS OF STAFF *in Index of Persons*
Paper 668
WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON INDIA 170, 186, 268, 290, 613, 622–4, 628–9, 635, 642, 644, 649, 653
Papers 114, 116, 135, 155
Minutes 120, 152, 159, 641

WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON INDIAN FINANCIAL QUESTIONS 71–2, 74, 85, 103, 107, 119, 132, 137, 205, 220, 230, 242, 248, 256, 260, 268, 298, 335, 346, 370, 399, 431, 465, 472, 578, 594, 629
WAR CABINET COMMITTEE ON INDIAN FOODGRAIN REQUIREMENTS 371–3, 376, 378, 393, 409–10, 419, 434, 444, 448, 451, 458, 465, 470–2, 478, 530–1, 541, 551
Papers 367, 391
Minutes 413, 453
Note of Informal Meeting 20 Mar. 1944 433
WAR CABINET CONCLUSIONS 2, 61, 71, 133, 139, 168, 171, 219, 304, 320, 342 n., 358, 378, 388, 393, 434, 476, 485, 532, 575, 623, 629, 653
WAR CABINET PAPERS
on Indian food and shipping situation 66–7, 106, 119, 132, 207, 347, 354 and n., 372, 376, 432, 470, 551
on Wavell's Sept.–Oct. 1943 constitutional proposals 160–1, 163, 165, 172
on political situations in Bengal and Orissa 313–14, 538, 564
on release of Gandhi and place of detention if re-arrested 492, 501, 563
on Rajagopalachari and Gandhi, July 1944 proposals 590, 620, 622, 628, 649
on other subjects 289, 475, 507, 522, 538, 621 n.
WAR CABINET SHIPPING COMMITTEE 66
WAR FINANCIAL SETTLEMENT *see* *Chapter 7 in Summary of Documents*
WAR PURPOSES FUND: Indian 199
WASHINGTON CONFERENCE, MAY 1943 ('TRIDENT') 66
WASHINGTON POST 602
text of Drew Pearson article in 603
WESTERN INDIA STATES AGENCY 17
WICKENDEN REPORT *see* REPORT ON THE DISTURBANCES 1942–3
WILSON COLLEGE, BOMBAY 53

YORKSHIRE POST 126
YUSUFZAI MULLAHS OF MARDAN 89

INDIA 1943-4

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